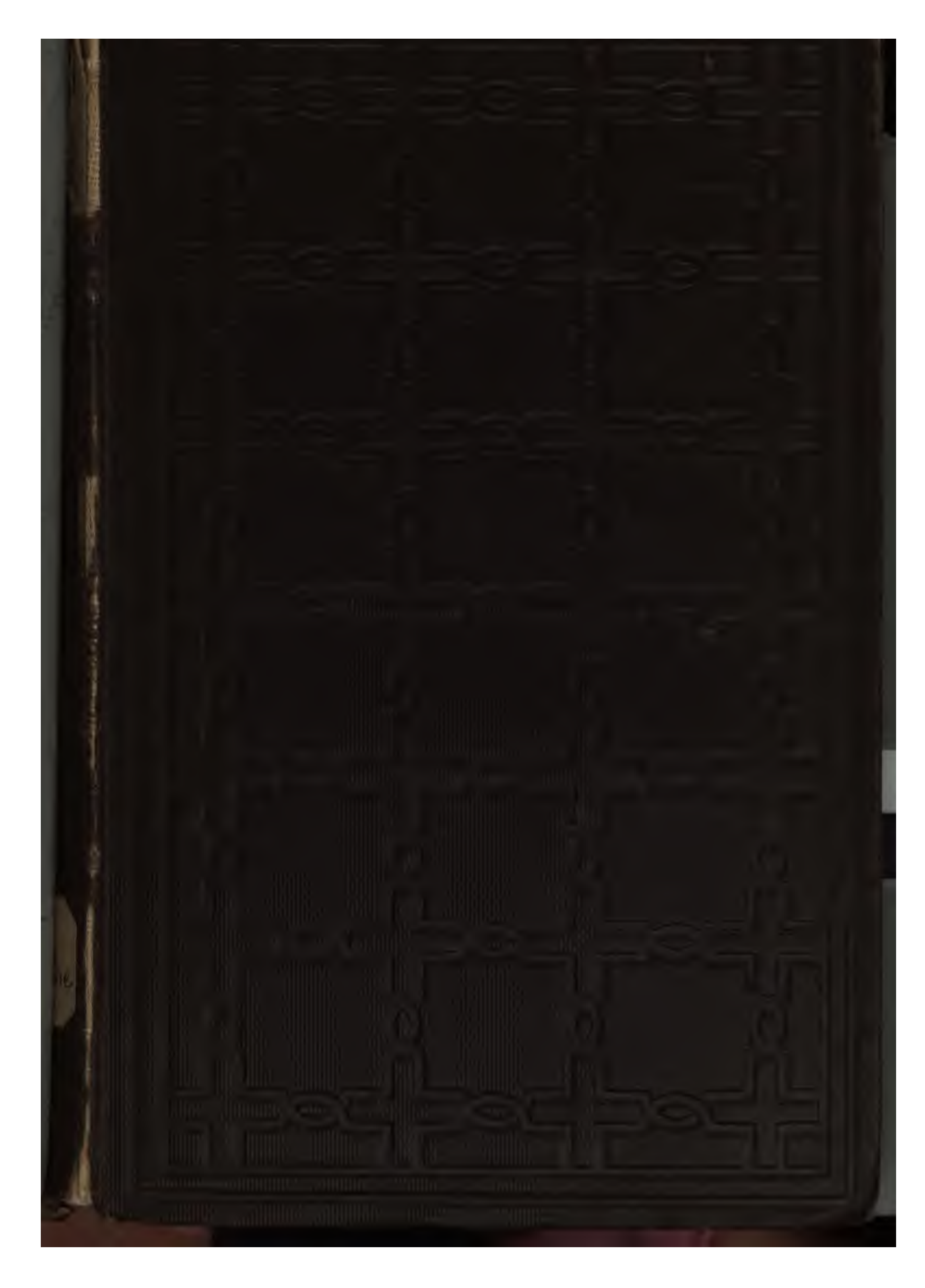


LES CONFIDENCES.

CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURES,

BY

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE,

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE GIRONDISTS," "RAPHAEL," ETC. ETC

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

EUGÈNE PLUNKETT.

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PREFACE.

LETTER TO M. PROSPER GUICHARD, OF BIEN-ASSIS.

* * * * * LET us come to the subject of thy letter. Thou makest inquiry: "What can be the nature of these *Confidences*, of which a daily paper, whose circulation in France and in Europe is immense, announces the publication in its columns?" Thou art justly astonished at the sight of the domestic pages of my obscure life thus surrendered by me, during my lifetime, to the indifferent gaze of some thousands of readers of *feuilletons*.*

"This publicity," sayest thou, "blights the matters of the heart, and *feuilletons* are the base coin of books. Why dost thou commit this fault?" addest thou, with that somewhat harsh frankness which is the stoicism of real friendship. "Is it to nourish thyself with thine own feelings?—They will belong less to thyself when they belong to every one. Is it for glory's sake? There is no glory in the cradle; it is only to be found on the tombs of a very small number of men. Celebrity is only the glory of the passing hour; it has no morrow. Is it for money's sake? Seeking it in one's own veins is diving too deep and paying too dear for it! Explain all this, for it is incomprehensible to me; or pause, if it be not too late."

Alas! my friend, I will explain myself; but I begin by ad-

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* Name given to the space occupied in French newspapers by literary and critical articles, as well as to those articles themselves.—TR.

mitting with humility that thou art right on all points. When thou wilt have listened, however, with a slightly partial ear to my explanation, it will be thy turn sorrowfully to admit, perhaps, that I have not done wrong. Here are the facts, in all their nakedness; they are also a confidential disclosure, and not the least indiscreet, perhaps.

Thou rememberest the days of our youth, those autumn days which I used to spend with thee at thy mother's solitary manor-house in Dauphiny, on that hill of *Bien-Assis,* which hardly swells above the plains of Crémieux, like the lessening wave that brings a vessel to the strand. From here I can yet see the terrace with its vine-clad arcades; the spring in the garden, beneath the weeping-willows which thy mother had just planted, and some sprig of which, no doubt, now sheds its leaves above her grave; the deep woods behind, which rang, of a morning, with the voices of thy dogs; the parlor, adorned with the portrait of thy father in the uniform of a general officer, with a red riband of the olden time; finally, the turret, all filled with books, the key of which thy mother kept, and which was never opened save under her supervision, through fear that our hands might cull *hemlock* for *parsley* amid that thick and deceitful vegetation of the human mind, where the panacea grows so near the poison.

Dost thou also remember thy vacation journeys to Milly, where thou didst know my mother, who loved thee almost as a son? Her pleasing face, her eyes filled with the tenderness of her soul; the tones of her voice, betraying and at the same time awakening emotion; her smile of peace, in which goodness always beamed, in which the slightest shade of raillery never contracted her lips—have they remained in thy memory?

"What connection," wilt thou say to me, "is there between all this—the manor-house of Bien-Assis, the little house of Milly, my mother and thine, and the publication of these pages of thy youth?"

Thou shalt see.

My mother had the habit—contracted at an early period, in the somewhat Roman education which she had received at Saint Cloud—of placing an interval of meditation between the day and slumber, as sages seek to place one between life and death. When every one had retired to rest in her house; when her children were slumbering in their little beds around her own; when nought was to be heard but their regular breathing in the chamber, the noise of the wind against the

window-shutters, the barking of the dog in the yard, she would gently open the door of a closet that was filled with books, educational, devotional, historical; she would seat herself in front of a small writing-desk, made of rose-wood inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, whose different compartments had the shape of clusters of orange flowers, and remove from a drawer several sheets of paper bound together in gray pasteboard like account-books. She would write on those sheets for an hour or two, without once raising her head, and without allowing the pen once to tarry in suspense above the paper to await the descent of a word in its proper place. That was the domestic history of the day, the annals of the hour, the fleeting remembrance of things and feelings, seized in its flight and stopped in its course ere night had lent it wings; the happy or sorrowful dates, the family events; the fall of the sand of time arrested in the hour-glass, the outpourings of anxiety and melancholy, the outbursts of gratitude and delight; the prayers to God, yet warm, which had gushed from the heart; all the feeling notes of a nature that lives, loves, enjoys, suffers, blesses, invokes, adores—in a word, a written soul!

These notes, thus thrown upon paper at the close of each day, like drops of her existence, increased at last, and formed, at her death, an immense and precious reservoir of remembrances for her children. There are twenty-two volumes of them. I have them always within my reach; and when I wish again to find, again to see, again to hear my mother's soul, I open one of them, and that soul appears to me.

Now, thou knowest how hereditary habits are. Alas! why are not virtues also hereditary? . . . . This habit of my mother became mine at an early period. When I left college she showed me those pages, and said to me:

"Follow my example: give a mirror to thy life. Grant an hour to the registering of thy feelings and to the silent examination of thy conscience. It is good, during the day, before the commission of this or that act, to think: 'It will make me blush before myself to-night as I write it down.' It is also grateful to fasten on the joys which escape us or the tears that fall from our eyes, to find them, some years after, on these pages, and to say to ourself: 'This then is what made me happy! This then is what made me weep!' It teaches us the mutability of feelings and things; it makes us prize pleasures and sorrows, not according to their value at the mo-

ment, which deceives us, but according to the value of eternity, which alone deceives us not!"

I hearkened to these words, and obeyed. I did not obey literally, however. I did not, like my mother, write down every day, the day that had passed. The headlong course of life, the impetuosity of passion, the seductive influence of places, persons, thoughts, and events; the disgust awakened by an oft-troubled conscience, which I could only have contemplated with humiliation and pain, hindered me from keeping that register of my steps in life with the pious regularity of that saintly woman. But from time to time, during those hours of calm when the soul rests itself, during those periods of solitude when the heart remembers kindnesses and likenesses, during those lifeless times of existence when one lives only in the past, I wrote, (carelessly, and without reflecting whether any eye but mine own would ever read these pages,) I wrote, say I, not all, but the principal emotions of my internal life. With the end of my pen I stirred the hot or cold ashes of my past existence. I breathed on those cinders in my heart to reanimate their light and heat in my bosom a few days longer! I did this at six or seven different periods of my life, in the form of notes, none of which has any connection with the other save the identity of the soul that wrote them.

This much said, follow me yet a moment, and forgive the length of my letter.

Five or six years ago, in order to work in peace at the History of the French Revolution, I had gone, during the summer, and taken refuge in the little isle of *Ischia*, situated in the middle of the Gulf of Gaëta, and separated from the continent by that beautiful sea, without which no site is complete for me—the visible infinite which makes the eye feel the limits of time and catch glimpses of that existence which is boundless. Ischia, as thou wilt perceive by perusing these pages, has always been dear to me from another cause. It was the scene of two of the most touching reminiscences of my life: one as sweet and juvenile as infancy, the other as serious, strong, and durable as manhood. We love the spots where we have loved. They seem to preserve our heart of former times for us, and to restore it to us whole and uninjured, that we may love again.

One day, then, during the summer of 1843, I was alone on the terrace of the fisherman's small house which I inhabited, lying in the shade of a lemon-tree, gazing at the sea, listening

to its waves, which bring and carry away the rustling shells of its shores, and breathing the breeze sent into the air by the under-tow of each billow, like the humid fans which poor negroes wave above the brows of their masters in our tropical climes. The day previous, I had finished culling from the memoirs, manuscripts, and documents which I had brought with me for "The History of the Girondists." I was in want of materials.

I had reopened those which never fail us,—our remembrances. I was writing, on my knee, the story of *Graziella,* that mournful and fascinating presentiment of love with which I had formerly met in that very same gulf, and I was writing it in view of the Isle of *Procida,* in view of the ruins of the little house amid the vines and the garden on the seashore, which her shade yet seemed to be pointing out to me with its finger. I saw on the sea a boat under full sail, approaching through sheets of foam beneath a burning sun. A young man and a young woman were seeking to shelter their brows in the shade of the mast.

The door of the terrace opened. A little boy of Ischia, serving as guide to those who had newly arrived in the island, entered and abruptly announced a stranger.

I saw a tall and supple young man draw near; his pace was slow and measured, like that of a person who is burdened with a thought, and fears to let it fall; a black beard encircled his manly and benevolent countenance, whose profile stood out from the blue heavens in two pure Grecian lines, like those physiognomies of the young disciples of Plato which are found in the sand of the Pyræus, on medals or on sculptured stones of a shaded white. I recognised the walk, the profile, and the voice of Eugène Pelletan, one of the friends of my second age. This name is known to thee as that of one of the writers who have the greatest share of the early brilliancy of our future glory in their first pages,—living presentiments of thoughts that are to bloom; precursors of that age when we will only be represented by our prayers and wishes. I love Pelletan with that inclination which we have for the future. I welcome him as a piece of good news and as a friend. He is one of those men who never importune you, but who aid you to think as well as to feel.

He had left his youthful and gracious wife at a house on the beach. After having conversed for a moment about France and about the island in which, as he had casually heard at

Naples, I had sought retirement, he noticed the leaves which were on my knees and the half-consumed pencil which was between my fingers. He asked me what I was doing. "Do you wish to hear it," returned I, "while your wife is sleeping away the fatigue of the voyage, and while you are resting yourself against the trunk of that orange-tree? I will read it to you." And, while the sun was sinking behind *Epomeo*, a high mountain on the island, I read a few pages of the story of *Graziella*. The spot, the hour, the shade, the sky, the sea, the perfume of the trees, spread themselves over the colorless and scentless pages, and in his mind awakened the illusion of the unexpected and the far-distant. He seemed to be moved. We closed the book. We descended to the seashore; during the evening, in company with his wife, we strolled over the island; I granted him a night's hospitality, and he departed.

I remained at Ischia until the first autumnal storms, and then set out myself for Saint Point.

It was pressing business which called me back there; *res augusta domi*, as Horace says; a mournful saying which the moderns have translated by *domestic penury*, *vexations of fortune*, *difficulties of living* according to one's station. "How dost thou know them?" sayest thou to me, no doubt. "Couldst thou not free thyself from them by honorably serving thy country, which has never precluded thee from the career of its liberally-rewarded negotiations?" That is true: but since 1830, I have preferred to serve, at my own cost, in the army of God, an unpaid defender of the thoughts which have no budget on the earth. Be that as it may, I was abruptly and unexpectedly asked to refund a considerable amount which I had borrowed in order to redeem from my relatives the estate and the house of my mother, that Milly which was so well known to thee, and where we have so often roamed and dreamed together, when thou wast sixteen years old and I fifteen. At my mother's demise, that bit of heart rather than of land was about to be sold to be divided in five parts, neither of which belonged to me. It was about to pass into unknown hands. My sisters and my brothers-in-law, who were as sorely afflicted as myself, generously offered me every means of saving the common repository of their remembrances. I was richer then; I made a supernatural effort; I purchased Milly. I hoped to end my days there. The weight of that land, every inch of which I paid for with borrowed money, crushed me for a long time. I joy-

ously submitted to that burden, in order not to sell a feeling with each furrow. I never repented me of it; I do not repent me of it yet. But at length the hour when I must either sink or sell was approaching. I delayed in vain. If time has wings, the interests of a principal have the swiftness and the weight of a rail-car.

I was agonized. . . . . I wallowed in my distress. I would make up my mind, then fall back from the resolution taken. From a distance I gazed with despair at that little gray steeple on the side of the hill, at the roof of the house, at the tops of the linden-trees which are known to thee, and which are to be seen above the tiles of the village. I said to myself: "I will never dare to tread this road again; I will never dare to cast my eyes this way again. Yon steeple, yon hill, yon roof, and yonder walls will reproach me all my lifetime for having surrendered them for a few bags of crowns! And these worthy inhabitants! And these honest and poor vine-dressers, who are my foster-brothers, and with whom I have passed my childhood's days, eating the same bread at the same table! What will they say? What will become of them when they are informed that I have sold their fields, their vineyards, their homes, their cows and their goats, and that a new landlord, who loves them not, will overthrow and ruin—to-morrow perhaps—their whole destiny, which, like my own, is deeply rooted in this ungrateful yet native soil?"

And I always returned more perplexed and more tormented than ever. But the hour was pressing. I summoned one of those men who are respected in the country, who purchase property at wholesale to sell it again at retail, one of those intelligent coiners of earth; and I said to him: "Sell as much of Milly for me as will make a hundred thousand francs;" or rather, as Shakspeare's Merchant of Venice said to the Jew, "Sell a piece of my flesh for me!"

This man, whom thou knowest, for he comes from thy place, M. M——, was tender-hearted. I perceived tears in his eyes. He would have given his profit to have spared me that sorrow; but it was too late for deliberation. We went together through the grounds, under a vague pretext, to examine what part of the estate could be most conveniently separated from the rest, and be divided into lots suitable to the buyers of the neighborhood. But it was then that the embarrassment became more intricate, and the anguish more heart-rending between us. "Sir," said he to me, extending

his arm and dividing the air with a gesture as a surveyor divides a piece of land, "here is a lot which might easily be sold together, and which would not make too great a breach in the remainder."—"Yes," answered I, "but it is the vineyard planted by my father the year of my birth. and which he always charged us to keep, in memory of him, as the best part of the estate irrigated with his perspiration."—"Well, then," resumed the appraiser, "here is another that would greatly tempt buyers with limited means, because it is fit for cattle."—"Yes," returned I, "but it may not be done; it's the river, the meadow and the orchard where our mother used to make us play and bathe in our childhood, and where she nursed with so much care those apple, apricot, and cherry trees for us. Let us seek elsewhere."—"That hillock behind the house?"—"Why, that's the hill that closed in the garden and stood opposite the window of the family parlor. Who could look at it now without weeping?"—"That cluster of houses apart from the rest, with those slanting vines which descend into the valley?"—"Oh! that's the residence of my sisters' foster-father and of the old woman who reared me with so much love. I might as well purchase two places in the cemetery for them, for they would soon be brought there by the grief with which they would see themselves driven from their home and their vineyard."—"Well, then, the main building, with the out-houses, the gardens, and the space around the enclosure?"—"But I wish to die there in my father's bed. It's impossible; it would be the suicide of all domestic feelings."—"What have you to say against the bottom of yonder dale which cannot be perceived from your windows?"—"Nothing more than that it contains the old grave in which were buried before my own eyes, during my childhood, my little brother and a sister for whom I have so bitterly mourned. Let us go elsewhere! everywhere here we would mutilate a sacred sentiment."

We walked onward in vain; we found nothing which could be separated from the rest without carrying off at the same time a shred of my soul. In the evening I returned mournfully to the house. I did not sleep.

On the following morning the country letter-carrier handed me a package of letters. Among them was one from Paris. The superscription was written in one of those clear, running, brief hands which betoken promptness, exactitude, and firmness of purpose and mind in the volubility of the writing. I

opened it. It was from M. de G——; "M. Pelletan," said he, "has spoken to me with warmth of some pages of Remembrances of Childhood, to the perusal of which he listened at *Ischia.* Will you send them to the *Presse?* It will send you in exchange, the amount that you may ask." I replied, without hesitating, by thanks and a refusal. "The price offered by the paper," said I to M. de G——, "is far above the value of a few worthless pages; but I could never make up my mind to publish the dust-covered relics of my memory, which are devoid of interest for any other glance than my own."

The letter was sent. Six days afterwards, the notary came to draw up the plan of the sale of Milly. The agent had at length carved off a part of it, worth fifty thousand francs, which was ready to find a buyer. The deed was on the table. With a single word I was about to remove that portion forever from my sight. My hand trembled, my gaze became overclouded, my heart failed me.

At that moment my door was opened. The letter-carrier entered. He threw on the table a letter from Paris. M. de G—— insisted with a kindness which had the accent and the appearance of friendship. He granted me three years to accustom myself to the thought. Distance smoothed away the angles of every difficulty. It weakened every thing, and at the same time veiled every thing. I did not hide from myself any of the gall that the engagement into which I was about to enter would distil for me. On one side I weighed the sorrow it would awaken to see indifferent eyes running over the throbbing fibres of my heart, laid bare beneath glances which know not indulgence; on the other, the bitter anguish of my heart, from which my own hand was about to tear another piece by the deed of sale. It was necessary either to make a sacrifice of self-love or a sacrifice of feeling. I placed my hand before my eyes; I made my choice with my heart. I took the scheme of the sale of Milly from the hands of the notary. I tore it to pieces, and replied to M. de G——: "I accept." Milly was saved and I was bound. Think of *Bien-Assis* and condemn me, if thou darest. In my place, wouldst thou have acted differently?

Quiet thy fears, however. In delivering up these simple pages, I have only surrendered myself. In them there is neither a name, nor a memory, which can suffer a pain or be overclouded by my indiscretion. I have met but few wicked people on my journey through life. I have lived in an atmos

phere of goodness, genius, generosity, love, and virtue. I only remember the good. I forget the others without any effort. My soul is like those sieves in which the gold-washers of Mexico gather bits of the pure metal in the torrents of the Cordilleras. The sand falls through them, the gold remains. What good is it to burden one's memory with what does not serve to nourish, delight, or console the heart? * * * *

Now, when the grief of that publicity to be endured, weighs too heavily on my mind; when I picture to myself the pity of some, the smiles of others, the indifference of all, as they turn over these pages which should have remained in the shade—like thefts committed on the modesty of life, or on the privacy of the domestic hearth; I saddle my horse, I ascend at a slow pace the pebbly path of Milly; I look to the right and to the left, in the fields and amongst the vines, at the peasants, who greet me at a distance with an affectionate nod, a friendly gesture, and a smile of gratitude; I go and seat myself under the beams of the autumnal sun, in the farthermost corner of the garden, whence the best view is to be had of the paternal roof, the vineyards, the orchard; I contemplate with a moistened eye that little square house, with the immense ivy planted by my mother, which rounds its angles, and makes them green, like natural props sprung from the earth to keep our old walls from crumbling away before I do; I listen to the sound of the vine-dressers' pick moving the soil on the hill which I have preserved for them; I see, rising from their roofs of lava, the smoke of the fire lighted on their old hearths by the women, to call them back from the fields; I watch the shadow of the linden-trees lengthened by approaching night, and see them stretch towards me like crouching phantoms coming to lick my feet and bless me. * * * *

Do thou the same; thou, my old friend! Be indulgent! And if thou canst not approve, at least excuse me, as thou thinkest of the walls and the trees beneath which thou didst grow up in the atmosphere of thy first years, surrounded on all sides by the memory of thy forefathers! . . .

A. DE LAMARTINE

SAINT POINT, *December 25th,*

LES CONFIDENCES.

CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURES,

BY

A. DE LAMARTINE.

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BOOK I.

NOTE I.

To * * * .

You wish to know the first half of my life! For you love me: but you only love me in the present and in the future. My past life escapes you; it is a part of me which is stolen from you - it must be restored to you. And to me also will it be sometimes sweet, often painful, to go back for you, and with you alone, as far as those living and hidden springs of my existence, my feelings and my thoughts. When the stream is already exhausted and turbid, and flows between arid sands, but in tumultuous waves which are already bitter, who would not like, ere those waves are lost in the common ocean, to reascend the long windings of its course, billow by billow, and valley by valley—to admire with his eye, and gather in the hollow of his hand, its first surges shooting from the rock, hid beneath the leaves, as fresh as the snow which showers them down, as blue and as deep as the sky above the mountain which in them is reflected? Ah! that which you ask me to do will be a delightful refreshment for my soul, and at the same time an affectionate and gratified curiosity for you. I am verging on that doubtful period of human life when the man who has attained one-half of the years which are allotted by the Almighty to the most favored mortals, feels as if he were hanging for a moment between the two parts of his existence, and hardly knows whether he is still ascending, or has already

commenced to travel downwards. That is the hour for those who yet take an interest in themselves, or in whom others take an interest, to pause an instant—to look backwards, and through the gloom which already begins to gather and contend for their possession, to seize again upon the sites, the hours, the persons, the sweet memories which evening obliterates, and to which they would like to give that eternal life in another's heart which all these things have in their own. But, when about to commence unrolling for you these folds of my recollections, which are so entirely private and so carefully closed, I feel streams of affection, melancholy, and sorrow, rush up in burning gushes from the depths of my bosom and almost smother my voice with all the sobs of my past life. They were as if asleep, but they were not dead; it may be that I am wrong to stir them—perhaps will I not be able to continue. Silence is the winding-sheet of the past: it is sometimes impious, often dangerous to raise it. But even when it is raised piously and lovingly, the first moment is a cruel one. Have you sometimes passed through any of the most terrible trials of life? I have passed through them twice, and I never think of them without shuddering.

Death has robbed you by surprise, and during your absence, of one of those beings in whom you live more than in yourself—a mother, a child, an adored wife. Brought back by the fatal intelligence, you arrive ere the earth has received the sacred deposite of that body wrapped in eternal slumber. You cross the threshold, you ascend the stairs, you enter the chamber, you are left alone with God and Death. You fall upon your knees beside the bed, you remain for whole hours with arms extended, with face pressed against the curtains of the funereal couch. You rise at last; you take a few precipitate or slow steps at random through the room: now you approach; anon you draw back from that bed on which a spotless sheet, thrown over a motionless body, reveals while it covers the form of the being that you will never see again. A terrible doubt fastens upon you; the loved face has no shroud on it. I can raise it; I can gaze upon it once more. Must I see it again as death has made it? Must I kiss that brow through the cloth? and never behold that departed face again except in memory, and with the hue, the look, the expression, which it bore in life? Which is best for the consolation of the living, for the worship of the dead? Problem not to be solved! I too readily conceive that it should be self-administered, and that it should

be differently answered. As to myself, I have also put it to myself; but instinct has always prevailed over argument. I wished again to see; I have seen again! And it has not changed the tender piety of remembrance which I wished to impress upon myself; but the memory of the animated and living face, confounding itself in my thoughts with the memory of the face that was motionless, and as if carved in marble by the hand of death, has left in my soul—in all that concerns those faces which are petrified in my affections—something that throbs like life—something that is immutable like immortality.

In opening this sealed book of my memory for you, I experience something of that feeling of hesitation. Beneath the veil of oblivion lies a dead body: it is the corpse of my youth! How many delightful pictures, but also how many bleeding regrets will be reanimated with it! It matters not; you desire it; I obey you. In what gentler and more pious hand could I place the yet smoking ashes of what was once my heart, that they may be preserved a few days longer?

NOTE II.

My God! I have often regretted that I was born! I have often wished to fall back even into nothingness, rather than advance through so many falsehoods, so many sufferings, and so many successive losses, towards that loss of ourselves which we call death! Still, even in those moments of terrible faint-heartedness, when despair overmasters reason, and when man forgets that life is a task imposed upon him to finish, I have always said to myself: "There are some things which I would regret not to have tasted—a mother's milk, a father's love, that relationship of heart and soul between brothers, household affections, joys, and even cares!" Our family is evidently our second self, more than self, existing before self, and surviving self with the better part of self. It is the image of the holy and loving unity of beings revealed by the small group of creatures who hold to one another, and made visible by feeling! I have often understood why family ties should be extended. But destroy them! . . . . That is a blasphemy against nature, and an impiety against the human heart! What

would become of all those affections which are born with them, and which build their nest beneath the paternal roof! Life would have no source; it would not know whence it came, nor whither it is going. All those affections of the soul would become abstractions of the brain. Ah! God's master-work was ordaining that those of His laws which are the most powerfully preservative of humanity, should at the same time be the most delightful feelings of self! So long as we do not love we do not understand.

Happy is he who by God's will is born of a good and holy family. It is the first of all the blessings of destiny. And when I say a good family, I do not mean a noble family of that nobility which men honor and register on parchment. There is a nobility in all stations. I have known families of husbandmen in which that purity of sentiment, that chivalry of honesty, that flower of delicacy, that legitimacy of traditions which is called nobility, were as visible in their actions, their features, their language, their manners, as they ever were in the highest monarchical races. There is a nobility of nature as well as of society, and it is the best. It matters little on what floor above the street, or of what size in the fields, the domestic hearth is, provided it be the asylum of piety, integrity, and those family affections which it perpetuates. The predestination of a child is the house in which he is born. His soul is made up especially of the impressions which he remembers. The glance of our mother's eye is a part of our soul, which penetrates into us through our own eyes. Where is there one amongst us who, when he merely sees that glance in imagination or in a dream, does not feel something descend into his thoughts which calms their agitation and brightens their serenity?

God granted me the favor to be born in one of those chosen families which are as a sanctuary of piety, where you only breathe the good reputation left behind them by a few generations as they passed in succession through life; a family without any great lustre, but without any stain, placed by Providence in one of those intermediate ranks of society in which one belongs to the nobility by name, and at the same time to the people by mediocrity of fortune, simplicity of life, and by a residence in the country, in the midst of peasants, with the same habits and nearly the same employments. If I had to be born again, it is still there that I would wish to be born. The station is a good one to allow you to see and un-

derstand the various conditions of humanity—half-way. Not high enough to be envied, not low enough to be contemned; an accurate and precise point at which meet and unite the elevation of thought which is produced by the elevation of the point of observation, the simplicity of feeling which is preserved by familiarity with nature.

NOTE III.

On the banks of the Saône, as you ascend the stream, a few leagues from Lyons, between villages and meadows, on the side of a hill which hardly swells above the plains, rises the small but graceful town of Macon. Two gothic steeples, decapitated by the Revolution and wasted by time, attract the eye and the thought of the traveller who descends towards Provence, or towards Italy, on the steamboats which furrow the river from morn till night. Below these ruins of the ancient cathedral, extend, for about half a league in length, long rows of white houses, and the quays where the merchandise of the South of France and the produce of the vineyards of Macon are shipped and unshipped. The upper part of the town, which is not seen from the river, is abandoned to silence and repose. It looks like a Spanish town. In the summer, grass grows between the stones of the pavement. The high walls of the old convents darken its narrow streets. A college, a hospital, several churches, some rebuilt, others crumbling away and serving as storehouses for the coopers of the place; a large square, planted with linden-trees at both ends, where the children play, where the old men seat themselves in the sun when the weather is fine; long faubourgs of low houses which wind up to the very top of the hill; a few handsome residences with one side fronting the town, while the other faces the country and is hid in verdure; and, in the neighborhood of the square, five or six hotels or large mansions, which are almost always closed, and which, in winter, are inhabited by the ancient families of the province; such is the sight presented by the upper town. It is the quarter of what were formerly called the nobility and clergy; it still is the quarter of the magistracy and of land-holders. It is always the same everywhere: people descend from the heights to work, and reascend to rest themselves. They

retire from the bustle of life as soon as they have its comforts.

At one of the corners of that square—which was a rampart previous to the Revolution, and which still retains that name—stands a large and high house, with but few windows, whose massive walls, blackened by the rain and scorched by the sun, have been joined for more than a century by enormous clamps of iron. A high and wide door, preceded by a flight of two steps, gives entrance to a long vestibule, at the extremity of which a heavy stone staircase shines in the light which enters through a gigantic window, and ascends from floor to floor to lead to numerous deep apartments. That is the house in which I was born.

NOTE IV.

My grandfather was still living. He was an aged nobleman who had served a long time in the armies of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., and who had received the cross of Saint Louis at the battle of Fontenoy. When he returned to his native province with the rank of a cavalry-captain, he brought back with him the habits of elegance, splendor, and pleasure which he had contracted at court or in the garrisoned towns. The owner of a handsome fortune in his birthplace, he had married a rich heiress of Franche Comté, who had brought him as a dowry broad lands and deep forests in the neighborhood of Saint Claude and in the defiles of the Jura, not far from Geneva. He had six children, three sons and three daughters. According to the notions of the times, the entire fortune of the family had been reserved for the elder son. The second, in spite of himself, had entered the priesthood, for which he had not the slightest calling. Of the three daughters, two had been thrust into convents, the other was a canoness, and had taken her vows. My father was the last born of that numerous family. At the age of sixteen, he had been made to join the service and enter the same regiment in which his father had served before him. He was never to marry: that was the rule of that period. He was to grow old in the humble rank of a captain of cavalry, which he had attained at an early date; visit the paternal roof from time to time when on furlough; slowly gain the cross of Saint

Louis, the sole aim of the ambition of all country gentlemen; then, when advanced in years, and provided with a small pension from the king and a still smaller patrimonial portion, vegetate in the topmost chamber of some old castle belonging to his elder brother, superintend the gardener, hunt with the pastor, break the horses, romp with the children, play chess or backgammon with the neighbors—the born toady to everybody; a domestic slave, happy to be so; loved, but neglected by every one, and thus finishing his life, unnoticed, without property, without a wife, without children, until infirmities and sickness banish him from the parlor to the naked chamber, where hang his helmet and his old sword against the wall, and until the day when the other tenants of the castle say—"The Chevalier is dead."

My father was the Chevalier de Lamartine, and this was the life that had been reserved for him. Modest and respectful, he would have accepted it with a sigh, but without a murmur. An event happened which abruptly changed all these arrangements of fate. His elder brother became valetudinary; his medical attendants advised him not to marry. He said to his father: "We must marry the Chevalier." This produced a general insurrection of all the family feelings, of all the prejudices of custom in the mind and in the heart of the old nobleman. Chevaliers were never made to be married. My father was left with his regiment. An adjournment was made from year to year of this difficulty which was so shocking, especially to my grandmother. Marry the Chevalier! that was monstrous! On the other hand, to permit the humble race and obscure name to become extinct, was a crime against one's own blood. It was important that some decision should be made; and yet no determination was taken, and the Revolution was approaching.

NOTE V.

There was at that period in France, and there is at the present time in Germany, an institution, both religious and secular at the same time, of which it would be difficult for us to form an idea now-a-days without smiling, so closely were religion and the world there drawn together and commingled

in a contrast which was charming and at the same time severe. It was what is called a chapter of noble canonesses. These chapters were thus formed:

In a province and in a site which were generally well chosen, not far from some large town whose vicinage animated that sort of uncloistered convent, the rich and noble families of the kingdom sent those of their daughters to live, who, after having stood what was called the test, evinced no taste for the secluded life of a nunnery, and to whom, however, their parents were not able to give a sufficient dowry to enable them to marry.

They gave them each a small portion, and built for them a handsome house enclosed in a little garden on a uniform plan; these houses were grouped around the chapel of the chapter. They were sorts of free cloisters placed next to one another, but with doors half-open to the world; something like an imperfect secularization of the religious orders of former times—a refined and gentle transition between the church and the world. These young girls were sent here so soon as they reached their fourteenth or fifteenth year. They began by living under the supervision of those canonesses who were most advanced in age, who had already taken their vows, and to whose care they were committed by their friends. Then, so soon as they were twenty years old, they took charge of their own household, associated themselves with one or two of their companions, and lived together in little groups of two or three.

They seldom lived at the chapter except during the fine season. In winter, they were called back to the neighboring towns to spend some six months of pleasure in the bosom of their families, and to adorn the parlors of their mothers During their residence at the chapter, they were restricted to nothing, except to go twice a-day and sing in the chapel; and even from this the slightest pretext was sufficient to exempt them. In the evening, they would assemble at one time at the abbess's house, at another in one of their own dwellings, to play, converse, and read, without any rule to follow other than their own tastes, without any supervision other than that of an aged canoness, who was the indulgent guardian of that charming flock. They were obliged, however, to return to their own residences at a stated hour. Men were supposed to be excluded from these assemblies, but there was an exception which conciliated every thing. The younger canonesses were

each permitted to receive their brothers' visits during certain days of the week, and they could introduce them to their friends at the social meetings of the chapter. On these occasions the most tender friendships were naturally formed between the young officers who came to spend a few days with their sisters, and the youthful friends of those sisters. The formation of these ties was certainly followed from time to time by an elopement, or by mysterious whisperings in the chapter; but a pious reserve, an irreproachable propriety, generally characterized those extremely delicate relations of intimacy, and those sentiments mutually felt, reanimated by annual visits to the chapter, often resulted in love-matches, which at that period were of such rare occurrence in French society.

NOTE VI.

One of my father's sisters was a canoness in one of those noble chapters in the Beaujolais, on the banks of the Saône, between Lyons and Macon; she had taken her vows in her twenty-first year. She had a house there which my grandfather had built for her. In this house she harbored a charming friend, sixteen years old, who had just entered the chapter. My father, while visiting his sister at Salles, (that is the name of the village,) was struck with the charms, the superiority of mind, and the angelic nature of that young lady. The youthful recluse and the handsome officer loved one another. My father's sister naturally became the confidant of their mutual affection. She favored their love, and after many years of constancy, after many obstacles had been overthrown, after much family opposition had been vanquished, the decrees of fate—whose most powerful minister is always love—were fulfilled, and my father became the husband of my sister's friend.

NOTE VII.

Alice des Roys—that was our mother's maiden name—was the daughter of M. des Roys, the chief-steward of the Duke of

Orleans. Madam des Roys, his wife, was under-governess of that prince's children, and the favorite of that beautiful and virtuous duchess whom the Revolution respected even while it drove her from her palace, and led her sons into exile, and her husband to the scaffold. M. and Madam des Roys had lodgings in the Palais Royal in winter, and at Saint Cloud in summer. My mother was born at the latter place, where she was reared along with the King Louis Philip, in that respectful familiarity which always springs up between children who are nearly of the same age, and who share the same lessons and the same pastimes.

How often has our mother spoken to us about the education of that prince, who had been driven from the land of his birth by one revolution; who was to be placed upon a throne by another? There is not a fountain, nor a walk, nor a grass-plot in the gardens of Saint Cloud with which we did not become familiar through her recollections of childhood, before we saw it ourselves. For her, Saint Cloud was her Milly, her cradle, the spot where her first thoughts had blossomed, bloomed, grown and strengthened with the plants in that beauteous park. All the loud-sounding names of the eighteenth century were the first which had stamped themselves on her memory.

Madam des Roys, her mother, was a woman of rare merits. Her duties in the family of the first prince of the blood-royal drew around her many of the celebrities of that period. Voltaire, at the time of his last short journey to Paris, which was a triumph, came and paid a visit to the young princes. My mother, who was not more than seven or eight years old, was present at the interview; and though so young, she saw, by the impression produced on those who surrounded her, that she was gazing on one who was something more than a king. Voltaire's attitude, his costume, his cane, his gestures, his words, remained indelibly graven on that childish memory, like the imprint of an antediluvian being in the rocks of our mountains.

D'Alembert, Laclos, Madam de Genlis, Buffon, Florian, the English historian Gibbon, Grimm, Morellet, M. Necker; the statesmen, scholars, and philosophers of that day, lived in the society of Madam des Roys. She had been particularly acquainted with the most immortal of them all, J. J. Rousseau. My mother, though very pious and extremely obedient to the inflexible dogmas of Catholicism, had retained a deep admiration for that great man, no doubt because he had more than a

genius, because he had a soul. She did not belong to the religion of his genius, but to the religion of his heart.

NOTE VIII.

The Duke of Orleans, who was also the Count de Beaujolais, had the appointment of a certain number of ladies to the chapter of Salles, which was a dependency of his duchy. It was thus and it was through him that my mother received her appointment at the age of fifteen or sixteen. I have a portrait of her, taken at that period, besides the portraits which her sisters and our father himself have so often drawn for us from memory. She is represented in her canoness's dress. In the picture, you see a tall young woman, slender and graceful, with handsome white arms protruding at the height of the elbow from the narrow sleeves of a black dress. On her bosom hangs the little golden cross of the chapter. Her raven locks are covered with a lace veil, which is not as black as the hair beneath, and which falls and floats on either side of her face. That youthful and ingenuous countenance is all that sparkles in the midst of those sombre hues.

Time has somewhat dimmed the freshness of the coloring. But the features are as pure as if the brush were not yet dry on the limner's pallet. In them you clearly perceive that sweet smile of life, that inexhaustible tenderness of the soul, the glance and the lips, and, above all, that ray of inward light—always so full of the serenity of mind, always so full of feeling—which gushed like an eternal caress from her eye, which was somewhat deep and slightly veiled by the lid, as if, through fear of dazzling beholders, she did not wish all the light and all the love that lay within to shoot forth. By merely glancing at this portrait, you conceive how deep must have been the passion which such a woman awakened in my father's bosom, how intense the piety which she was to awaken afterwards in the bosom of her children.

My father himself at that period, was worthy both by his outward appearance and his character, to captivate the heart of a woman of sensibility and courage. He was no longer very young: he was in his thirty-eighth year. But for a man born of a sturdy race, who was to die—still young in mind and body—at the age of ninety, with all his teeth, all his hair, and with

that severe and imposing beauty which comports with old age, thirty-eight was the prime of life. His stature was high, his attitude martial, his features manly, and stamped with all the characteristics of command. Gentle pride and frankness were traits revealed by his glance. He affected neither levity nor elegance, although he was gifted with much of both. With a prodigious fermentation of the blood at the bottom of his heart, he outwardly appeared to be cold and indifferent, because he feared himself, and was ashamed, as it were, of his own sensibility.

There never was a man in the world who was less conscious of his own virtue, and who enveloped more closely the austere perfections of a heroical nature in the modesty of a woman. I was deceived in him myself for many years. I thought him harsh and severe; he was only just and strict. As to his tastes, they were as primitive as his soul. Patriarch and soldier—that was all the man. The chase and the woods, when he was on furlough in the country; during the remainder of the year, his regiment, his horse, his arms, the regulations scrupulously followed and ennobled by the enthusiasm of a military life; these were his only occupations. In his eyes there was nothing more important than his rank as a captain of cavalry, than the esteem of his companions. His regiment was more to him than his family. He was as jealous of its honor as he was of his own. He knew the name of every officer and man by heart. He was adored by them. His profession was his life. He had no sort of ambition for a greater fortune or a higher rank. The utmost extent of his desires was to be what he was, a good officer; to have honor for his soul, the king's service for his religion; to spend six months of the year in a garrisoned town, and the other six months in a small country house of his own, with a wife and children. In a word, the primitive man, somewhat modified by the soldier—such was my father.

The Revolution, misfortune, age, and thought, changed and completed him in his latter days. I may say that I myself saw his vast and pliant nature develop itself after seventy years of life. He was of the race of those oaks which grow and renew themselves until the day when the axe is applied to the roots of the tree. At eighty years of age he was still advancing towards perfection.

NOTE IX.

I have already said what obstacles of fortune and what family prejudices were in opposition to his marriage. His constancy and my mother's surmounted them. They were united at the very moment when the Revolution was about to shake all human institutions, and even the ground on which those institutions were reared.

The Constituent Assembly was already at work. With the power of a reason that, so to speak, was divine, it was undermining the privileges and prejudices on which rested the ancient order of society in France. Already were those great emotions of the people, like waves which the wind is beginning to toss, carrying away, at one time Versailles, at another the Bastile, and again the Hotel-de-Ville of Paris. But the enthusiasm even of the nobility for the great political and religious regeneration existed still. Notwithstanding those first heavings of the earth, they fancied that it would only be transient. There was no scale in the past whereby they could measure in advance the height which that overflow of novel ideas would attain. My father did not leave the service when he married; in all this he only saw that he would have to follow his flag, defend his king, contend a few months against disorder, shed a few drops of his blood in the performance of his duty. These precursory lightnings of a tempest that was to shatter a throne and make Europe tremble for half a century at least, were lost for my mother and him in the first delights of their love, in the first foretastes of their future felicity. I remember once to have seen the branch of a willow which had been torn by the tempest's hand from the parent trunk, floating in the morning light upon the angry surges of the overflowing Saône. On it a female nightingale still covered her nest as it drifted down the foaming stream, and the male on the wing followed the wreck which was bearing away the objects of his love!

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Hardly had they tasted the happiness for which they had waited so long, when they were forced to interrupt it and separate, perhaps, alas! never to meet again. It was the time of emigration. At that period, emigration was not, what it afterwards became, a refuge from persecution and death. It was a universal vogue of expatriation which had fastened itself upon the French nobility. The example set by the princes became contagious. In a single night regiments lost their officers. During a certain time it was considered a disgrace to remain where the king and France were. It required great moral courage and great firmness of character to resist that epidemical madness which assumed the name of honor. My father evinced that courage; he refused to emigrate. But, when the officers of the army were asked to take an oath which was repugnant to his conscience as a faithful servant of the king, he sent in his resignation. The 10th of August was drawing near, however, and its approach was felt. It was known in advance that the Tuileries would be attacked, that the king's life would be in danger, that the Constitution of '91, that momentary pact of conciliation between representative royalty and the sovereign people, would be overthrown or triumphantly maintained in streams of blood. The devoted friends of what was left of monarchy, and the men who were personally and religiously attached to the king, counted their numbers and united to go and strengthen the Constitutional Guard of Louis XVI., and to take their places, at the hour of peril, around the king. My father was one of those men of heart and courage.

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My grandfather's family offered but few pretexts for persecution. None of its members had emigrated. My grandfather himself was an old man of more than eighty years of age. His eldest and his second son, the Abbé de Lamartine, had both been reared in the doctrines of the eighteenth century, and had sucked, from their infancy, the milk of that philosophy which promised to give the world a new order of things. They both belonged to that party of the young nobility that received from those who were above them and propagated with the utmost ardor the ideas of political transformation. Those who imagine that the French Revolution originated amongst the lower orders grossly deceive themselves. Ideas always come from above. It was not the people who made the Revolution, it was the nobility, the clergy, and the thinking portion of the nation. Superstitions sometimes have their birth amongst the people,—philosophies are born only amongst the heads of society.

In other words, the French Revolution is a philosophy. Be that as it may, my grandfather, and especially my uncles, had the revolutionary sap in their minds. They were passionate partisans of a constitutional government, of a national representation, and of the fusion of all the orders of the state into one single nation, subject to the same laws and the same taxes. Mirabeau, the Lameths, Lafayette, Monnier, Virieu, Larochefoucauld, were the principal apostles of their political faith. Madam de Monnier (Mirabeau's Sophia) had lived a short

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NOTE II.

My grandfather's family offered but few pretexts for persecution. None of its members had emigrated. My grandfather himself was an old man of more than eighty years of age. His eldest and his second son, the Abbé de Lamartine, had both been reared in the doctrines of the eighteenth century, and had sucked, from their infancy, the milk of that philosophy which promised to give the world a new order of things. They both belonged to that party of the young nobility that received from those who were above them and propagated with the utmost ardor the ideas of political transformation. Those who imagine that the French Revolution originated amongst the lower orders grossly deceive themselves. Ideas always come from above. It was not the people who made the Revolution, it was the nobility, the clergy, and the thinking portion of the nation. Superstitions sometimes have their birth amongst the people,—philosophies are born only amongst the heads of society.

In other words, the French Revolution is a philosophy. Be that as it may, my grandfather, and especially my uncles, had the revolutionary sap in their minds. They were passionate partisans of a constitutional government, of a national representation, and of the fusion of all the orders of the state into one single nation, subject to the same laws and the same taxes. Mirabeau, the Lameths, Lafayette, Monnier, Virieu, Larochefoucauld, were the principal apostles of their political faith. Madam de Monnier (Mirabeau's Sophia) had lived a short

time in my grandfather's house. Lafayette and the Abbé de Lamartine had been educated together. They had again met in Paris; they kept up a regular correspondence. They were united by the ties of real friendship,—a friendship that outlived forty years' absence, and about which the illustrious general still conversed with me the year before the last of his life.

Such was the shade of the opinions of the family. There was nothing in it repugnant to the Revolution of '89; my father and my uncles only separated from the renovating movement at the moment when the Revolution, escaping from those democratic hands, became a demagogy, turned against those very ones who had warmed it into life, and changed to violence, spoliation, and executions. It was at that moment also that persecution entered their dwelling, not to leave them until the death of Robespierre.

NOTE III.

One night the populace entered my grandfather's house and tore him from it, notwithstanding his eighty-four years, along with my grandmother, who was almost as old and infirm, my two uncles, and my three aunts, the nuns, who had already been driven from their convents. They threw all this family helter-skelter into a cart that was escorted by gendarmes, and conveyed it, through the hooting, the shouts, and the cries of death of the mob, as far as Autun. Here an immense prison had been prepared for the reception of all the suspected persons of the province. My father, by an exception whose cause was unknown to him, was separated from the remainder of the family, and confined in the prison at Macon. My mother, who was then nursing me, was left all alone in my grandfather's immense mansion, under the supervision of a few soldiers of the revolutionary army. And does it excite surprise that those men who date their lives from such dark days have infused a gloomy taste and a shade of melancholy into the genius of the French people? Virgil, Cicero, Tibullus, Horace himself, who gave that character to the genius of the Romans, were they not also born during the great civil wars of Rome, and greeted at their entrance into the world by the noise of the proscriptions of Marius, Sylla, and Cæsar? Think of

the feelings of pity or terror which agitated the bosoms of the Roman mothers while they bore those men in their wombs! Think of the milk soured by tears which I myself drew from the breast of my mother while the whole family was suffering a captivity which generally terminated in death!—while the husband she adored was on the steps of the scaffold, and while she herself was a captive in her own deserted dwelling, guarded by ferocious soldiers who watched her tears to make her tenderness a crime and to insult her sorrow!

NOTE IV.

Behind my grandfather's mansion, which extended from one street to another, there stood a small, low, dark house which communicated with the large building through an obscure passage, and through small narrow yards that were as damp as wells. This house served to lodge some old domestics who had left the service of my grandfather, but who were still attached to the family by the small pensions which they continued to receive, and by the few voluntary services which they from time to time rendered their former masters. When the large hotel was placed in sequestration, my mother, with one or two female attendants, retired to this small house. There was another attraction which drew her to it.

Directly in front of her windows, on the opposite side of that lane which was as dark, as still, as narrow as any street in Genoa, stood, and still stand at the present day, the high walls with but few windows, of a building which had formerly been an Ursuline convent,—an edifice of an austere aspect, as silent and meditative as the purpose for which it was intended, with quite a handsome church-portal on one of its sides, and, behind it, deep court-yards and a garden surrounded by black walls whose height destroyed all hope of overleaping them. As the ordinary prisons of the town were crowded to overflowing, the Revolutionary Tribunal of Macon had had this convent prepared as a supplementary prison, to cast into it the surplus of prisoners. Chance or Providence decreed that my father should be confined within its walls. Thus, all that separated him from happiness was a wall and the width of a street. It also happened that the interior of the Ursuline convent was as familiar to him in all its details as his

own dwelling. One of my grandfather's sisters, whose name was Madam de Lusy, was Abbess of the Ursuline convent at Macon. Her brother's children, in their younger days, constantly came to play in the convent. They were the amusement of the poor nuns. There was no walk in the garden, no cell, no secret stairway, no part of the garret, no nook or dust-hole in the cellar, that was not known to them, and of which their childish memories had not retained a vivid recollection in every insignificant particular.

Hence, my father, when he was suddenly thrown into this prison, found himself in well-known quarters. To crown this piece of good fortune, the jailer, who was a republican open to bribery, had been, fifteen years before, a cuirassier in the company under my father's command. His new rank had not changed his heart. Accustomed as he had been to respect and love his captain, his heart melted at the sight of him, and when the doors of the Ursuline convent closed upon the captive, the republican was the one who wept.

My father there found himself in goodly and numerous company. The prison contained about two hundred crimeless prisoners, the suspected persons of the department. The only favor that my father asked of the jailer was to be lodged alone in one corner of the garret. A high dormer-window, which opened on the street, would at least afford him the consolation of gazing sometimes through the iron bars at the roof of his own dwelling. This favor was granted. He settled himself beneath the tiles, with the assistance of a few boards and a wretched pallet. During the day, he descended amongst his companions in captivity to take his meals, play, and converse about the affairs of the times, on which head the prisoners were forced to have recourse to conjecture alone, as they were not permitted to receive any written communications from without. But this seclusion was not of long duration for my father.

The same sentiment which had prompted him to ask the jailer for a cell which looked out on the street, and which kept him gazing for whole hours at the roof of his little house opposite, had also inspired my mother with the thought of ascending often to the garret of her dwelling, and seating herself near the skylight in such a manner as to see without being seen. From this place she could contemplate, through her tears, the roof of the prison where the one she loved was snatched from her tenderness and hid from her eyes. As two

glances, two minds which seek one another through the universe always meet at last, they must meet with all the more certainty when only separated by two walls and a narrow street. Their eyes did meet, their souls thrilled, they understood each other's thoughts, and their signs took the place of words, through fear that the sound of their voices should reveal the secret of their intercourse to the sentries in the street. They thus regularly spent several hours of the day, seated opposite to one another. Their whole souls had centered in their eyes. My mother, who had kept pens and paper, thought of writing in large characters a few short lines containing in brief what she wished to communicate to the prisoner. The latter answered by signs. From that moment a correspondence was established. It was soon completed. My father, being a knight of the Arquebuse, always had in his house a bow and arrows, with which I have often played in my childhood. My mother thought of using them to enable her to communicate more thoroughly with the captive. She practised shooting with the bow for several days in her apartment, and when she had acquired sufficient skill to be certain of not missing her mark at the distance of a few feet, she fastened a string to the arrow, and sent the arrow and string through the window of the prison. My father hid the arrow, and drawing the string towards him drew a letter along with it. By this means, and under the favor of night, paper, pens, and ink were sent to him. He would answer at his leisure. Before the break of day, my mother would draw in the long letters in which the prisoner poured out his affection and his afflictions—in which he interrogated, counselled, consoled his wife, and spoke of his child. My poor mother would carry me up into the garret in her arms every day, show me to my father, suckle me before him, make me extend my little hands towards the bars of the prison, press my head against her breast, devour me with kisses before the prisoner, and thus seem to send to him from the depths of her soul all the caresses with which she covered me for his sake.

NOTE V.

Months flew by in this manner, months that were troubled by fear, agitated by hope, illumined and sometimes consoled

by those glimmers of light which were constantly sent backwards and forwards by loving eyes even in the darkness of sorrow and adversity. Love inspired my father with a boldness that was still more fortunate, and whose success made imprisonment itself delightful, and drove from his mind all fear of the scaffold.

I have already said that the street which separated the Ursuline convent from the paternal house was very narrow. Not satisfied with seeing my mother, writing to her, and conversing with her, my father conceived the idea of annihilating the distance which separated them. She shuddered; he insisted. A few hours of happiness snatched from persecution, and from death perhaps, were well worth a minute's danger. Who could say whether such an opportunity would ever offer itself again? Whether, on the morrow, orders would not be given to transfer the captive to Lyons, Paris, or the scaffold? My mother yielded. With the assistance of the arrow and string she sent him a file. One of the iron bars of the small prison window was filed away in silence and put back in its place. Then, one night when there was no moon, a thick rope, fastened to the string, glided from the roof of my mother's dwelling into the hands of the prisoner. One end was firmly tied to a post in the garret of our house, the other was fastened by my father to one of the iron bars of his grated window. Hanging to it with both hands and feet, and slipping from knot to knot above the heads of the sentinels, he crossed the street, and found himself in the arms of his wife and beside the cradle of his child.

Having thus escaped from prison, he was at liberty not to return to it; but condemned then, as he would have been, by contumacy or as an absentee, he would have ruined his wife and destroyed his family: he did not even conceive such a thought. As a last means of safety, he reserved the possibility of such an escape for the eve of the day when he would be summoned to appear before the revolutionary tribunal, or to march to the scaffold. He had the certainty of being advised of it by the jailer. That was the only service that he had asked of him.

NOTE VI.

What nights were those spent in staying the hours on the bosom of all that one loves! Within a few paces of the sentries, of the iron bars, of the prison cell, and of death! They did not compute the strides of the stars through the night by the song of the nightingale or lark, like Romeo and Juliette, but by the footsteps of the night-watch which were heard beneath the window, and by the number of sentinels relieved. Ere the heavens grew pale, it was necessary to cross the street again, and re-enter in silence and stillness the grated window of the cell. Then the rope would be untied, slowly drawn in by my mother, and hid beneath a pile of mattresses in a corner of the garret, to be used again on other similar nights. The two lovers from time to time had interviews such as these, but they were obliged to manage them with prudence and prepare them with care; for, independent of the danger of falling into the street, or of being discovered by the superintendents, my mother was not certain of the fidelity of one of the women who waited on her, and one word from whom would have led my father to death.

That was the time when the proconsuls of the Convention divided the provinces amongst themselves, and in them exercised, in the name of public safety, a power that was absolute and often sanguinary. The fortunes, the life or death of families were dependent on a word from the lips of those representatives, on a compassionate movement of their souls, on a signature of their hands. My mother, who felt that the axe was suspended above the head of the husband she adored, had often been inspired with the thought of casting herself at the feet of those agents of the Convention, and asking them to liberate my father. Her youth, her beauty, her loneliness, even the counsels of my father, had hitherto withheld her. But the instances of the other members of the family who were confined in the dungeons of Autun, imperiously called upon her to take steps as a petitioner—steps which were not less trying to her pride than to her opinions. From the revolutionary authorities of Macon she obtained a passport for Lyons and Dijon. How often has she not described to me her repugnance, her faintheartedness, her terror, when, after the harsh rejection of numberless advances and solicitations, she had at last to appear

trembling and abashed in the presence of a representative of the people on a mission! At one time it was a churlish and brutal man who even refused to listen to that weeping woman, and who dismissed her with threats as a person guilty of an attempt to influence the justice of the nation. At another, it was a tender-hearted being who was moved to pity in spite of himself by the sight of such deep affection, of such touching despair; but who, hardened in appearance at least, by the presence of his colleagues, refused with his lips what he granted with his heart. Of all of them, the representative Javogues was the one whose character left the most favorable impression on my mother. At Dijon, when she was introduced to him and granted a hearing, he spoke to her kindly and with respect. She had carried me with her in her arms to the representative's apartment, in order that pity might have two faces to move him—that of a young mother and that of an innocent child. Javogues made her sit, complained of his mission of severity, which was imposed upon him by his office and the safety of the Republic. He took me upon his knees, and as my mother made a movement which betrayed her fear that he would let me fall,

"Fear nothing, citizen," said he to her, "republicans also have sons." And as I was smiling and playing with the ends of his tri-colored scarf, he added, "Thy child is very handsome for the son of an aristocrat. Rear him for his country's good, and make a citizen of him."

He expressed a few words of interest for my father and some hope of his early liberation. It was to him, perhaps, that he was indebted for being forgotten in prison, for an order for trial at that period was a death-warrant.

After returning to Macon and re-entering her house, my mother herself lived in confinement in her narrow dwelling opposite the Ursuline convent. Now and then, when the night was very dark, the moon absent, and the lamps in the streets extinguished by winter's blasts, the knotted rope would fly from one window to the other, and my father would come and spend hours of anxiety and delight by the side of all that he loved.

Eighteen long months passed in this manner. The 9th of Thermidor opened the doors of the prisons; my father was free. My mother went to Antun in search of her infirm parents, and brought them back to their house, which had been closed for such a length of time. A short time after this

return, my grandfather and grandmother died in peace and ripeness of age in their beds. They had passed through the great tempest, and had been shaken by it, but not prostrated. They had lost none of their children in it, and they could hope, when they closed their eyes, that the storm-cloud was exhausted for a long time to come, and that life would be more serene for those to whom they left it, when they departed from this earth.

BOOK III.

NOTE I.

The whole of my grandfather's fortune, according to the intentions as well as the customs of the times, was to have gone to the eldest son. But as the new laws had annulled the right of entail, and suppressed that of primogeniture, and as the vows of poverty made by my aunts, my father's sisters, were null in the eyes of the law, the family had to proceed to a division of the property. This property was considerable, in Franche Comté as well as in Burgundy. My father, by exacting his share like the rest of his brothers and sisters, might, by a single word, have changed his lot, and obtained one of the finest landed estates that the family had to divide. His scrupulous respect for his father's intentions kept him from even thinking of violating those intentions after his death. The revolutionary enactments suppressing the laws of primogeniture were quite recent; in his eyes, although he thought them very just, they yet had the appearance of compression, and of violence done to paternal authority. Asking their application in his favor against his elder brother seemed to him an abuse of his situation. He resolved, without claiming any merit for so doing, to give up all pretensions to the estates of his father and mother, and to content himself with the very small portion which had been secured to him by his marriage contract. He made himself poor, when by uttering a single word he might have made himself rich. The property of the family was divided. Each one of his brothers and sisters had

a large share. He wanted no part of it; he remained with nought for his fortune but the little estate of Milly, which had been assigned to him at the time of his marriage, and which, at that period, only produced an income of two or three thousand livres. My mother's dower was very small. The emoluments of the offices which her father and brothers held in the household of Orleans, had disappeared with the Revolution. The princesses of that family were in exile. They sometimes wrote to my mother. They remembered their early friendship for the daughters of their under-governess They never failed to surround them with their remembrance in exile, and their favors in prosperity.

NOTE II.

My father did not deem himself released by the Revolution from his honorable fidelity to his flag. This sentiment closed all the avenues to fortune for him. An income of three thousand livres and a small house, out of repair and naked, in the country, for himself, his wife, and the numerous children who were beginning to take their places around the family board, were a something very uncertain between frugal ease and straitened indigence. But he had contentment of mind, his love for his wife, the rustic simplicity of his tastes, his strict but generous economy, the perfect conformity of his desires with his situation,—in a word, his religious dependence in God. With these he courageously attacked the narrow difficulties of his existence. My mother, young, beautiful, reared in the midst of all the elegance of a brilliant court, stepped, with the same smiling resignation and the same inward happiness, from the apartments and gardens of a princely mansion into the small unfurnished chamber of a house which had been empty nearly a century, and into the contracted garden covering a quarter of an acre of ground, and surrounded by dry stones, in which all the splendid dreams of her girlhood were to be confined. Since then, I have often heard both of them say that, notwithstanding the severity of their fate, those first years of calm and quiet after the agitation of revolutions, of retirement in their love, and of mutual enjoyment in that sequestered spot, were, to take them all in all, the sweetest

years of their lives. My mother, even while she suffered greatly from poverty, always despised riches. How often has she not pointed out to me the narrow limits of the garden and fields of Milly, saying, "They are very small, but they are large enough, if we know how to make our wishes and our habits proportionate to them. Happiness is in our own breasts; we would not have a greater share of it, if we were to extend the limits of our meadows and our vineyards. Happiness is not measured like land, by the acre; it is measured by the contentment of the heart, for it is God's will that the poor should have as much as the rich, in order that neither the rich nor the poor should think of imploring it from any one but Him!"

NOTE III.

I will not imitate J. J. Rousseau in his *Confessions*. I will not tire you with the relation of the puerilities of my early infancy. The life of man only begins with feeling and thought. Until then, man is a being, he is not even a child. The tree no doubt begins at its roots, but those roots, like our instincts, are never destined to be revealed to light. Nature intentionally hides them, for therein lies her secret. To our eyes the tree begins only at the moment when it shoots from the earth and shows itself with its trunk, its bark, its limbs, its leaves, for the wood, the shade, or the fruit that it has one day to bear. Thus is it with man. Let us therefore leave the cradle to the nurse; and our first smiles, and our first tears, and our first lispings, to the rapturous joy of our mothers. I will only begin for you with those of my first recollections which were already rational.

Here are the two earliest scenes of life which often return to my memory, during those journeys which man makes towards the most distant part of the past in order to find his former self again.

NOTE IV.

It is night. The doors of the little house of Milly are closed. A friendly dog barks now and then in the yard.

Drops of autumnal rain beat against the glass of the two low windows, and the wind, as it blows in sudden gusts and breaks against the branches of two or three plane-trees and enters the interstices between the shutters, produces those fitful and melancholy wails which are only to be heard on the borders of large pine forests when you seat yourself at the foot of a tree to listen to them. The room in which I thus see myself again is large, but almost naked. At the further end is a deep alcove with a bed in it. The bed-curtains are of white serge, checkered with blue. That is my mother's bed : at its foot there are two cradles resting on wooden chairs; one of these cradles is large, the other small. They are the cradles of my two younger sisters who have already been asleep a long time. A large fire of vine-twigs burns at the back of a chimney of white stones, whose mantelpiece has been battered in several places by the hammer of the Revolution, which has broken the coat of arms, or the lilies which formed a part of its ornaments. The iron plate at the back of the fireplace has been turned around, because, no doubt, it bears on the other side the arms of the king; thick beams, which, like the boards they support, are blackened by the smoke, form the ceiling. Beneath the feet there is neither inlaid floor, nor carpet; simple squares of unvarnished brick, but of the color of earth, and broken into a thousand pieces by the iron-shod heels and wooden shoes of the peasants, who had made this their dancing-hall during my father's captivity. There are no hangings, of cloth or paper, on the walls of the chamber; nothing but the plaster, broken in several places, and showing the naked stonework, as a torn garment shows the limbs and bones beneath. In one corner, a little harpsichord stands open, with books of music of the *Devin de Village,* by J. J. Rousseau, scattered about on it; nearer the fireplace, in the middle of the room, stands a little card-table, with a green cloth all covered with spots of ink and full of holes; on the table are two tallow candles, which are burning in two candlesticks of plated brass, and which cast upon the whitewashed walls of the apartment a faint light and large shadows, which dance as the flame is moved by the wind.

Opposite the fireplace, with elbow leaning on the table, sits a man with a book in his hand. He is tall, and his limbs are strong. He yet has all the vigor of youth. His brow is open, his eye blue; his firm and gracious smile discloses to view teeth of dazzling whiteness. A few remains of his cos-

tume, and particularly his hair, and a certain military stiffness of position, reveal the retired officer. If any one were inclined to doubt it, he would only have to look at his sword, his regulation pistols, his helmet, and the gilt buckles of his horse's bridle, which shine suspended from a nail in the wall, at the back of a little closet which is open in the room. That man is our father.

On a settee of twisted straw, in the corner formed by the chimney-piece and the wall of the alcove, sits a woman who yet appears very youthful, although she is verging on her thirty-fifth year. Her form, which is also tall, has all the elasticity and all the elegance which belong to young girls. Her features are so delicate, her black eyes have such a frank and penetrating glance; her transparent skin so clearly reveals beneath its somewhat pale surface the blue of her veins and the quick-coursing red of her slightest emotions; her very black and very fine tresses fall with so many waves and such silken curves along her cheeks, down to her very shoulders, that it is impossible to say whether she is eighteen or thirty-eight years old. No one could wish to efface from her age one of those years which only serve to ripen her physiognomy and complete her beauty.

This beauty, although it is pure in each feature, if they are examined in detail, is especially visible in the harmony of the whole—in its grace, and above all in that radiation of inward tenderness, which is the true light of the soul illuminating the body from within, and of which the most beautiful countenance is only the outward transparency. This young woman, half reclining on cushions, holds in her arms a little girl who is slumbering, and whose head rests on one of her shoulders. The child's fingers are still clasped around one of her mother's long ringlets, with which she was playing a few moments ago before she fell asleep. Another little girl, somewhat older, is seated on a stool at the foot of the settee; she rests her fair head on her mother's knees. This young woman is my mother; these two children are my two largest sisters. Two others lie in the two cradles.

My father, I have said, holds a book in his hands. He is reading aloud. I still hear the sound of that manly, full, strong, and yet flexible voice rolling in broad and sonorous periods, which are sometimes interrupted by the rattling of the wind against the shutters. My mother, with her head slightly inclined, listens dreamily. I, with my face turned towards my

father, and my arm resting on one of his knees, drink in each word, anticipate each event, and devour the book whose pages unroll themselves too slowly to suit my impatient imagination. Now, what is this book? this first volume whose perusal, thus heard at the entrance into life, teaches me really what a book is, and opens for me, so to speak, the world of emotion, love, and revery?

This book was *Jerusalem Delivered;* Jerusalem Delivered, translated by Lebrun, with all the harmonious majesty of the Italian stanzas, but refined by the exquisite taste of the translator, and purified of all those glaring stains of affectation and false glitter which sometimes blemish the manly simplicity of Tasso's narrative, like a golden powder that might dim a diamond, but on which the Frenchman has breathed. Hence, Tasso, read by my father, and listened to with moistened eye by my mother, was the first poet who touched the fibres of my imagination and my heart; and therefore for me he is a member of that universal and immortal family which every one of us selects, in all countries and in all ages, to be the kinsfolk of his soul and the companions of his thoughts.

I have kept the two volumes with religious care; I have preserved them amid all the vicissitudes to which family libraries are subjected by changes of residence, death, inheritance, and division. From time to time, at Milly, in the same room, when I revisit it alone, I reopen them with pious respect; I reperuse a few of those same stanzas, and strive to counterfeit my father's voice, and imagine that my mother is still there, with my sisters around her, listening with half-closed eyes. I again find the same emotion in Tasso's verse, hear the same noise of the wind in the branches of the trees, the same crackling of the vine-twigs on the hearth; but my father's voice is not there—my mother's place on the settee is empty—the two cradles have changed into two graves which are growing green on foreign hills! And all this for me always ends with a few tears which fall from my eyes, and wet the book as I close it.

BOOK IV.

NOTE I.

I HAVE spoken to you of another scene of childhood which remained deeply imprinted on my memory when my feelings first began to shoot. As it will at the same time depict to you the nature of the early education I received from my mother, I will also describe it for you.

It is a fine autumnal day towards the end of September, or in the beginning of October. The mists float on the brows of the mountains. Now they enter in indolent waves and choke up the hollows of the valleys, which they fill like a stream that has started from the earth in the night; anon they float over the meadows at a short distance from the earth, as white and motionless as those sheets of linen which the women of the village spread upon the grass to be bleached by the dew; again gentle puffs of wind tear them, roll them, bend them along the sides of a row of hills, and allow you to catch glimpses between them of large fantastic perspectives, lighted up by the horizontal streaks of fire which shoot from the orb of the rising sun. It is not quite daylight yet in the village. I leave my bed. My garments are as coarse as those of the little peasants in the neighborhood; neither stockings, nor shoes, nor hat; pantaloons of coarse unbleached linen; a waistcoat of long-napped blue cloth; a brown woollen cap, like those which are worn at the present day by children in the mountains of Auvergne; this is my costume. I throw over all this, a canvas sack which opens on the breast like a wallet, with a large pocket. This pocket, like those of my companions, contains a piece of brown bread, a goat's-milk cheese as large and as hard as a pebble, and a small penny knife, the handle of which is rudely shaped, and also contains an iron fork with two long prongs. This fork is used by the peasants, in my country, to draw the bread, bacon, and cabbage, from the porringer in which they eat their soup. Thus equipped, I leave the house and hie to the village square, near the portal of the church, beneath two large walnut-trees. This is the place where the eight or ten little shepherds of the village, of about my own age, assemble every morning around their sheep, their goats, and a few lean cows, before they start for the mountains.

NOTE II.

We set out, and we drive before us the common flock, which follows in a long file and at an unequal pace the winding and arid paths of the first hills. When the goats go astray and leap the hedges, each of us, in turn, brings them back by casting stones at them with a sling. After having climbed the first naked heights which overlook the village, and which, at the rate that the flocks advance, cannot be reached in less than an hour, we enter a vast and high gorge where neither houses, nor smoke, nor cultivation is to be seen.

Both sides of this solitary glen are covered all over with heath, bearing violet flowers, and long yellow broom; here and there a few gigantic chestnut-trees stretch out their long branches half covered with foliage. The leaves, seared by the first frosts, fall in showers around the trees at the slightest gust of wind. A few black rooks are perched on the driest and most withered branches of those old trees. They fly away, croaking, when we approach; large eagles, or sparrow-hawks, high up in the firmament, circle for hours above our heads, watching the larks in the brush or the kids that draw nearer to their dams. Large masses of gray stone, dotted and yellowed by the moss, shoot out in groups up both the steep sides of the gorge.

Our flocks, freed from restraint, scatter themselves as they list in the broom. As to ourselves, we select one of those large rocks whose slightly-curbed brow forms a sort of half-arch and shelters a few feet of fine sand at its base from the rain. We there settle ourselves. We gather a few armsful of dry brush and dead branches fallen from the chestnut-trees during the summer. We strike a light, and kindle one of those shepherd's fires which are so picturesque to look upon when seen from the foot of a distant hill, or from the deck of a vessel sailing within sight of land.

A little clear and undulating flame shoots through the black, gray, and blue waves of smoke which rise from the green wood, and which are tossed by the wind like the mane of a runaway horse. We open our scrips, and we draw forth bread, cheese, sometimes hard eggs, seasoned with large grains of gray salt. We eat slowly as the flocks chew the cud. Sometimes one of us discovers at the end of the branches of a chestnut-tree a cluster of nuts forgotten on the limb after the

gathering. We all arm ourselves with our slings, and skilfully cast showers of stones which knock the fruit out of the half-open pod and make it fall at our feet. We cook it in the ashes of our fire, and if, besides, one of us finds any potatoes forgotten in the earth of a turned-up field, he brings them to us. We cover them over with ashes and coals, and we devour them smoking hot, seasoned with the pride of discovery and the pleasure of pilfering.

At mid-day, the goats and cows, that have already been lying for a long time in the sun on their thick beds of dead leaves and broom, are again called together. While the sun rising in the heavens has wholly dispelled the mists from the warm and brilliant heights, they have gathered in the valley and on the plains. We only see, looming above the hill-tops, the steeples of some high villages, and on the edge of the horizon the golden and shaded snows of Mount Blanc, whose gigantic skeleton and sharp ridges and projections are as distinctly visible as if they were quite near.

When the flocks are collected together, we direct our course towards the real mountain. The first Alp-like glen in which we have spent the morning we now leave far behind us. The chestnut-trees disappear; patches of short furze take their place; the acclivities become steeper; they are strewed with clumps of high fern; and here and there the bluebell and foxglove variegate them with their azure and purple flowers. Soon all this disappears likewise; nothing is to be seen but moss and rolling stones on the sides of the mountains.

The flocks stop here with one or two shepherds. The others, and I am one of that number, have noticed for several days past, on the furthermost top of the highest peak,—alongside of a coat of snow which forms a white spot to the north ward, and which only melts at a late day when the summers are cold,—an opening in the rocks, which must be the entrance to some cavern. We have often seen eagles take their flight towards that rock. The boldest among us have determined to go and drive the eaglets from their nests. Armed with our sticks and our slings we ascend to it to-day. We have foreseen every thing, even the darkness of the cavern. Each one of us, for several days past, has had a torch prepared to light himself through it. In the neighboring wood we have selected trunks of pine-trees eight or ten years old. These we have split lengthwise in twenty or thirty laths one or two lines thick. The lower end of the tree thus split is the only part of it that

we have left whole, in order that the laths shall not fall apart and that we may have a strong handle in our hands wherewith to carry it. We have bound them, moreover, at equal distances with bits of wire which keep the fasces together. We have dried them for several weeks in the public oven of the village after the bread has been withdrawn from it. These small trees thus prepared, charred by the oven and soaked in the natural rosin of the pine, form torches which burn slowly, which nothing can extinguish, and which throw forth brilliant red flames when fanned by the lightest breeze. Each one of us painfully bears one of these pine-trees on his shoulder. When we reach the foot of the rock, we make a circuit around its base to find the tortuous mouth of the cavern which yawns above our heads. We attain it by climbing from rock to rock, and lacerating our hands and knees. The opening, covered over by a natural arch formed by immense blocks serving as props to one another, is large enough to shelter us all. It soon grows narrower, obstructed by banks of stone which must be overleaped; then, turning suddenly and descending with the rapid slope of a stepless staircase, it sinks in the mountain and disappears in total darkness.

Here, our hearts fail us a little. We throw stones, the sound of which, as they slowly roll down, ascends to our ears with subterranean echoes. This noise startles the frightened bats from their cave, and they flap their clammy wings in our faces. We light two or three of our torches. The boldest and largest amongst us risks himself first. We all follow him. We crawl for a moment like the fox in his den. The smoke of the torches chokes us, but nothing disheartens us; and, the cave abruptly growing wider and higher, we find ourselves in one of those spacious subterranean halls of which caverns in mountains are almost always sure signs, while they enable them, so to speak, to breathe the outer air. A small basin of limpid water reflects in its depths the light of our torches. Drops, brilliant as diamonds, ooze from the walls of the vault, and, falling at regular intervals into the little pool, make that sonorous, harmonious, and plaintive sound, which, whether in small springs or great seas, is always the voice of the waters. Water is the melancholy element. *Super flumina Babylonis sedimus et flevimus.* Wherefore? Because water weeps with every one. Young as we are, we cannot help being moved by it.

Seated on the edge of the murmuring basin, we enjoy the

triumph of our discovery for a long time, although we have found neither lions nor eagles here, and although the sooty traces on the rocks of many a fire must satisfy us that we are not the first to be initiated into this mystery of the mountain. We bathe our limbs in this icy basin; we soak our bread in its waters; we forget ourselves for a long time in making searches for other branches of the cavern, so that when we leave it, day is declining rapidly and night is beginning to show her first stars in the firmament.

We wait until the darkness gathers around us a little closer. Then we all light the ends of our pine-trees. We carry them with the flame upwards. We thus rapidly descend from peak to peak, like shooting stars. We make fiery evolutions on the advanced hillocks so as to be seen in the distant villages of the plain. We roll down to our flocks like a torrent of fire. We drive them before us with cries and songs. When we at length reach the last hill which overlooks the hamlet of Milly, we halt on a sloping lawn with the certainty that we are seen; we form rings, we dance round about, we mingle our steps as we raise our lighted brands above our heads; then we cast them upon the grass, half consumed. We gather them together and make one single bonfire, whose slowly dying light we watch as we descend towards the dwellings of our mothers.

This is the manner, with a few variations depending on the seasons, in which my shepherd's days were spent. At one time it was the mountain with its caverns; at another the fields with their streams beneath the willows; the mill-dams in which we practised swimming; the young colts straddled bareback and broken by races; now the vintage with its grape-laden wagons whose oxen I drove with the cowherd's thong, and its foaming tubs in which I and my comrades used to press the juice; anon the harvest, and the earthen floor on which, with a flail proportionate to my childish arm, I used to thrash in cadence with the others. No man ever lived in closer contact with nature, or imbibed at an earlier age a love for rural life, the habits of the happy people who lead it, and a taste for those trades which are simple and yet as various as the cultivations, the sites, the seasons,—which do not make man a soulless machine with ten fingers, like the monotonous labors of other occupations, but which make him a thinking, feeling, loving being, in constant communication with the nature which he inhales through all his pores, and with the God whose presence His every blessing reveals.

NOTE III.

The first impressions of my life were humble, austere, and at the same time sweet. The first landscapes which my eyes contemplated were not of a nature to give much breadth or color to the wings of my imagination. It was at a later day and little by little that the magnificent scenes of creation, the sea, the sublime mountains, the resplendent lakes of the Alps, and the monuments reared by man in great cities, struck my eyes. In the beginning I only saw what is seen by the children of the humblest hamlet in a country devoid of all grandeur of physiognomy. Perhaps the best condition fully to enjoy nature and the works of man is to begin by all that is most modest and most common, and initiate one's self, so to speak, to the wonders of the world by degrees, and only as fast as the soul develops itself. The very eagle, destined to soar so high and to see so far, begins his life in the fissures of the rocks, and in his early days only sees the arid and sometimes fetid borders of his eyry.

The obscure village in which it was Heaven's will that I should first see the light and in which the Revolution and poverty confined my father and my mother, had nothing about it to mark or adorn the place of the humble cradle of a painter or of a contemplator of the works of God.

NOTE IV.

After leaving the channel of the Saône, which courses through the green fields and under the fertile hills of Macon, and advancing towards the little town and towards the ruins of the old abbey of Cluny, where Abailard died, the traveller follows a hilly road through the undulations of a country which begins to swell visibly like the first waves of a rising sea. Right and left are to be seen the white walls of hamlets amid the vines. Above these hamlets, barren and uncultivated mountains stretch out in steep and stony slopes, forming grayish-looking lawns, where the eye rests on a few flocks resembling small white dots. All these mountains are crowned by masses of rocks which shoot up from the earth and

whose peaks, worn by time and the winds, present to the eye the forms and rents of dismantled old castles. Following the road which runs around the base of these acclivities, the traveller finds, within about two hours' march from the town, a narrow path, overshadowed by willows, which descends through the fields towards a small stream where the sound of a mill-wheel is constantly heard.

This path winds for a short distance beneath the trees which hide it, alongside of the rivulet, whose running waters, when they are swelled by the springs, have no other channel; then you cross the water by a little bridge, and walk up a winding but steep slope towards groups of buildings covered with red tiles which you see above you on a small plateau. This is our village; a pyramidal steeple of gray stone there rises above the roofs of seven or eight cottages. The stony path glides from door to door between these dwellings. After you have trod the whole length of the road, you reach a gate which is somewhat higher and somewhat wider than the others. That is the gate of the yard at the back of which my father's house is hid.

The house is really *hid* there, for it is not to be seen on any side, either from the village or from the high-road. Built in the hollow of a large bend of valley; low and overtopped in every direction by the steeple, the out-houses, or the trees; reared against a mountain of considerable height, it is only after you have ascended that mountain that you can see beneath you that low but massive house which, like a large pile of blackish stone, rises at the extremity of a narrow garden. The building is square, only one* story high, and has three large windows on each side. Its walls are not plastered; rain and moss have given the stones the dark and ancient hue and appearance of old monastery walls. From the court-yard you enter the house through a high door of carved wood. This door opens above a flight of five wide free-stone steps. But the stones, although of colossal dimensions, have been so severely chipped and worn away by time and the burdens which are deposited on them, that they are completely separated, and shake beneath the tread, making a low murmuring sound; nettles and damp pellitories grow here and there in their interstices, and in the evening little summer-frogs, with sweet and mournful voices, sing there as if they were in a marsh.

* The French do not call the ground-floor a story. In English, we should therefore say that M. de Lamartine's homestead was two stories high.

You first enter a wide and well-lighted passage, whose width, however, is lessened by large presses of carved oak, in which the peasants put away the household linen; and by sacks of grain or flour placed there for the daily wants of the family. On the left is the kitchen, whose ever-open door permits you to perceive a long oaken table surrounded by benches. It rarely happens that peasants are not to be seen, at all hours of the day, around that table, for on it the cloth is always spread, either for the workmen, or for those innumerable chance guests to whom it is customary, in country places at a distance from towns which have neither hostelries nor taverns, to offer bread, wine, and cheese. Further on, you enter the dining-room. Its only articles of furniture are a pine table, a few chairs, and one of those old sideboards with compartments, drawers, and numerous shelves, which are heir-looms in all ancient dwellings, and which the taste of the present day has rejuvenated by seeking for them. From the dining-room you enter a withdrawing-room with two windows, one opening on the court-yard, the other on the garden. A stairway, which at that time was of wood, but which my father afterwards rebuilt in roughly-hewn stone, leads to the low and sole floor above, where a dozen rooms, almost devoid of furniture, open on obscure passages. These rooms were, at that time, for the use of the family, its guests, and the servants. This is the whole interior of the house which held us for so long a time within its dark and warm walls; this is the roof which my mother so lovingly used to call her Jerusalem, her House of Peace! This is the nest which sheltered us for so many years from the rain, the cold, from hunger, from the breath of the world; the nest where death came and seized upon father and mother in succession, and whose nestlings took to flight one after another, some for one place, some for another, some for eternity! . . . I carefully preserve its remains—the straw, the moss, the down—and although it is at present empty, cold, and deserted by all those delicious affections which once animated it, I like to look at it, I like again to sleep in it sometimes, as if places retained ever-present impressions of the past, and as if I expected again to hear on awaking from slumber the voice of my mother, the footsteps of my father, the joyous cries of my sisters, and all that noise of youth, life and love, which rings for me alone beneath the old rafters, and which only has me now to hear it and to perpetuate it a little while!

NOTE V.

The exterior of this dwelling is in keeping with the interior. On the side of the court-yard, the eye rests only on the wine-presses, the wood-houses, and the stables which surround it. The door of that court-yard opens on the village street, and is never closed. Through it are seen the peasants, passing to and fro on their way to and from the fields. They carry their implements on one shoulder, and on the other a large cradle in which slumbers a child. Their wives accompany them to the vineyards, often carrying another child at the breast. A goat and its kid follow behind, stop a moment to play with the dogs near the gate, then bound after their master.

On the opposite side of the street stands the ever-smoking village oven. It is the customary meeting-place of the gray-beards, the poor women who spin, and the children who come to warm themselves at its eternal fireside. This is all that is to be seen from one of the parlor windows.

The other window, which opens towards the north, permits the eye to shoot above the walls of the garden and the tiles of a few low houses, and to reach as far as a horizon of dark and almost always nebulous mountains, whence looms out—now lighted up by a yellow sunbeam, anon in the midst of mists—the ruin of an old castle encompassed by turret and tower. This is the characteristic feature of this landscape. If this ruin were removed, the brilliant reflex of evening on its walls, the fantastical wreathing of the foggy vapors around its battlements, would forever disappear along with it. A black mountain and a yellowish ravine are all that would remain. A sail on the sea, or a ruin on an acclivity, makes a whole picture. Earth is the scene; for the eye, thought, action, life, lie in the traces of man. Wherever there is life, there lies the interest.

The back part of the house rests upon the garden, a small enclosure of black stones of about a quarter of an acre. At the furthermost extremity of the garden the mountain begins to rise imperceptibly, cultivated and green with vines near the bottom, and further up bald and naked and as gray as those patches which grow on stones without the aid of vegetable

earth and which are hardly distinguishable. Two or three rocks of a similar dark hue give it a slightly jagged appearance at the top. Not a single tree, not even a bush rises above the heath with which it is carpeted. No solitary hut, no wreath of smoke animates it. It is this, perhaps, which constitutes the secret charm of that garden. It is like a child's cradle which the laborer's wife has hid in a furrow while she works in the field. The sides of the furrow hide the edges of the cradle, and when the curtain is raised, the child can only see a bit of sky between two undulations of earth.

As to the garden itself, it can boast of but little more than the name of garden. It could only have been called a garden in those primitive days when Homer described the humble enclosure and the seven meadows of old Laertes. Eight beds of vegetables laid out at right angles, bordered with fruit-trees, and separated by walks grass-grown and covered with yellow gravel; at the extremity of these walks, towards the north, eight crooked trunks of old trees which form a dark arbor above a wooden bench; another and a smaller arbor beneath the cherry-trees at the bottom of the garden; that is all. I have neither forgotten the murmuring spring, nor the well with its damp and greenish stones; there is not a drop of water on all that extent of ground; but I was about to forget a little reservoir dug by my father in a rock to catch the showers of rain; and around that green and stagnant water, twelve sycamores and a few plane-trees which cast a little shade over one corner of the garden from behind the wall, and which strew the oily surface of the basin with their large leaves seared by the summer sun.

Yes, this is really all. And yet this is what was, for so many years, sufficient for the enjoyment, the delight, the meditation, the sweet moments of leisure and of toil of a father, a mother, and eight children! This is what suffices, even at the present day, to nourish their memories. This is the Eden of their childhood, where their most placid thoughts take refuge when they wish to recover a little of that dew of life's morn, and a little of that variegated light of the first hour which only shines clear and bright for man on the spot where his cradle first was rocked. There is not a single tree nor a carnation, not a patch of moss in that garden which is not as deeply rooted in our souls as if it made part of them. That bit of land contains within such narrow limits so many things and so many remembrances for us, that to us it seems

immense. The mean, crazy wooden gate which leads to it and through which we used to rush with screams of joy; the beds of lettuce which had been divided into as many separate gardens for us, and which we used to cultivate with our own hands; the plateau at the foot of which our father used to sit with his dogs around him, when returning from the chase; the path where our mother used to walk at sunset, telling over the monotonous beads which fixed her thoughts on God, while her heart and her eyes were fixed on us; the bit of greensward in the shade and with a northerly exposure for warm days; the little warm wall to the southward against which, with book in hand, we used to lean like living props, all of a row, in autumn; the three lilac-trees, the two hazel-trees, the strawberries discovered beneath the leaves; the plums, the pears, the peaches found under the trees in the morning covered with their golden gum and bespangled with dew; and at a later day the arbor to which each one of us—I especially—used to hie at mid-day to peruse in quiet his favorite books; and the remembrance of the confused feelings awakened in us by those pages; and, at a still later day, the recollection of the familiar conversations held here or there, in this or that garden-path; and the spot where farewell was said before setting out for a long absence; that where the meeting took place upon returning; those on which occurred some of those familiar and pathetic scenes of the hidden drama of private life—where our father's countenance was seen to darken, where our mother wept as she forgave us, where we knelt at her feet and hid our faces in the folds of her dress; the spot where the death of a loved daughter was communicated to her; that where she raised her eyes and hands resignedly towards heaven! All those images, all those impressions, all those groups, all those faces, all those blisses, all those affections, still people that little enclosure for us as they peopled it and filled it with life and enchantment for so many of the sweetest days of our lives, and enable us, by re-collecting in thought the waters of existence that have since flowed away, to envelop ourselves, so to speak, in that earth, those trees, those plants that were born with us; and make us wish that the universe had commenced and would end for us within the walls of that humble enclosure!

This paternal garden still retains the same appearance. The trees, however, which have grown somewhat older, are beginning to cover their trunks with spots of moss; the borders of

roses and carnations have encroached on the sand and narrowed the paths. These borders drag their filaments where the feet become entangled. Two nightingales yet sing during the summer nights in the two deserted bowers. The same melodious breezes still sigh through the branches of the three pine-trees planted by my mother. The sun still leaves the same splendor in the heavens when it sets. There you can yet enjoy the same silence, which is only interrupted from time to time by the tolling of the bell in the steeple, or by the monotonous and sleep-provoking cadence of the peasants' flails on the thrashing-floors of the barns. But weeds, brambles, and tall blue mallows, grow in tufts between the rose-bushes. The ivy thickens its ragged draperies against the walls. Each year increases its encroachments on the ever-closed windows of our mother's chamber; and when by chance I stroll and forget myself for a moment in that garden, I am only torn from my solitude by the tread of the old vine-dresser who served us in those days as a gardener, and who returns now and then to revisit his plants as I return to revisit my remembrances, my apparitions, and my regrets.

NOTE VI.

You are now as well acquainted with that residence as I am. But why cannot I animate it for you for a single instant with the life, the bustle, the animation, the noise, and the affections which once filled it for us? I had already reached my tenth year ere I had yet experienced a bitterness of heart, a constraint of mind, a look of severity. Within me every thing was free; around me every thing was smiling. And yet I was neither enervated by the kindnesses of those whom it was my duty to obey, nor abandoned without restraint to the capricious exactions of my fancy, or of my childish desires. I merely dwelt in the sound and wholesome midst of the plenitude of life, between my father and my mother, and inhaled by their side nothing but love, piety, and contentment. To love and be loved had until then been the whole of my physical education; and it was self-formed in the open air and in the almost barbarous exercises which I have described. A plant of native and mountain growth, good care was taken

not to house me. I was left to grow up and become strong and comely by wrestling with the elements both winter and summer. That course of treatment was marvellously successful with me, and I was one of the finest-looking children that had ever pressed their naked feet on our mountains, whose race of men, however, is so hearty and so handsome. Eyes blue-black, like my mother's; features pure and almost Roman, softened by a somewhat pensive expression, as hers were; a dazzling ray of internal joy lighting up all that countenance; hair very soft and fine, of a golden brown, like the rind of the ripe chestnut, falling in waves instead of ringlets down my sunburnt neck; stature rather tall for my age; movements light, free, and graceful; an extreme delicacy of skin, however, which was also bequeathed to me by my mother, and a facility to change color, to blush, and turn pale, which betrayed the fineness of the cuticle, and the rapidity and power of the emotions of the heart over the features; altogether, the very counterpart of my mother, with a manly tone in the expression; this is the picture of the child that I then was. Happy in shape, happy in heart, happy in mind, life had written happiness, strength, and health on my whole being. Time, education, errors, mankind, sorrows, have effaced all this; but they and especially myself are the only ones I accuse. I then had no reproaches to make to nature.

NOTE VII.

My education was wholly formed in my mother's more or less unclouded glance, in her more or less open smile. The reins of my heart were in her heart. She only asked me to be true and good. It cost me no trouble to obey her. My father gave me the example of scrupulous sincerity; my mother, of a goodness that was carried to heroical devotedness. As my soul inhaled nought but goodness, it could produce nought else. I never had to contend with self, or with another. Every thing attracted, nothing constrained me. The little that was taught me was offered to me as a reward. My only teachers were my father and mother. I saw them read and I wished to read; I saw them write, and I asked them to help me to form letters. All this was done playfully, during

leisure moments, on their knees, in the garden, by the fireside in the parlor, with smiles, jokes, caresses. I took a liking to it; I provoked the short and amusing lessons of my own accord. I learned every thing in this way, somewhat tardily, it is true, but without ever knowing how I attained knowledge, and without ever seeing a frown put on to compel me to study. I was advancing without being conscious of my own progress. My mind, always in communication with my mother's, was developing itself, so to speak, in hers. Other mothers bear their children only nine months in their wombs; I can say that mine bore me twelve years, and that I was nourished by her moral life, as I had been by her physical life in her womb, until the moment when I was compulsorily and unfortunately torn from her to go and lead the corrupt, or at the very least, glacial life of a collegian.

Consequently, I neither had a writing-master, nor a reading-master, nor a teacher of languages. One of my father's neighbors, M. Bruys de Vandran—a man of talent who had retired from the world in which he had seen a great deal of life—used to visit us once a-week. He would give me writing-copies in a very beautiful hand, which I would imitate by myself and lay before him for correction at his next visit. The taste for reading had seized upon me at a very early age. It was with some trouble that a sufficient number of books, suited to my years, were found to feed my curiosity. These children's books soon failed to satisfy me. I cast longing glances at the volumes standing in rows on some shelves in a little closet in the parlor. But my mother restrained this impatience to know. She would only surrender to me a few of the books at a time, and with judgment. The Bible, abridged and purified; Lafontaine's fables, which struck me as puerile, false, and cruel at the same time, and which I was never able to commit to memory; the works of Madam de Genlis and of Berquin; extracts from Fenelon and Bernandin de Saint-Pierre, which delighted me even then; *Jerusalem Delivered*, *Robinson Crusoe*, some of Voltaire's tragedies, especially *Mérope*, read at eve by my father; it was from these that I drew, as the plant does from the earth, the first nourishing sap of my youthful mind. But it was in my mother's soul especially that I sought for nurture; I read through her eyes, I felt through her feelings, I loved through her love. She translated every thing for me,—nature, sentiment, sensations, thoughts Without her aid I would not have known how to

spell in the book of creation which was open before my eyes; but she directed my finger and placed it on every thing. Her soul was so rich in brilliancy, color, and warmth, that it illuminated and heated every thing it approached. In a word, the imperceptible instruction which I was receiving was not a lesson; it was the very action of life, thought, and feeling performed under her eyes, with her, through her, and as she herself performed it. We were living a double life. It was thus that my heart formed itself within me on a model, at which it was not even necessary that I should look, so completely was it commingled with my heart.

NOTE VIII.

My mother troubled herself but little about what is called instruction; she did not aspire to make me a "forward child for his age." She did not provoke me to that emulation which is but the jealousy of childish pride. She never had me compared to any one; she never exalted or humiliated me by such dangerous comparisons. She rightly thought that after my intellectual strength had been developed by time and health of body and mind, I would learn as easily as any other, that modicum of Greek, Latin, and figures, which constitutes that learned common-place which is called an education. Her wish was to make me a happy child, a sound mind, a loving soul; a creature of God and not one of man's dolls. She had drawn her ideas about education in the first place from her own soul, and then from J. J. Rousseau and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, those two philosophers who are the philosophers of women because they are the philosophers of feeling. She had known and had met them both in her childhood at her mother's house; she had read and greatly enjoyed their works since; in her younger days she had heard their systems discussed a thousand times by Madam de Genlis and by the able persons intrusted with the education of the children of the Duke of Orleans. It is known that that prince was the first one who dared to apply the theory of that natural philosophy to the education of his sons. My mother, reared with them and almost in the same manner, was to hand down to her own children those traditions of her own childhood. She did so

with care and discernment. She did not mistake that which was fit to be taught to princes, stationed by birth and fortune at the summit of a social order, for that which it is proper to teach the children of poor and obscure families. But her thought was that in every station of life the first care should be to make a man, and that when the man is made—that is to say the intelligent, sentient being who is on good terms with himself, with his fellows, and with his God—be he prince or peasant, it matters not which, he is what he should be; what he is, is good, and his mother's task is fulfilled.

It was in accordance with this system that she reared me. My education was a second-hand philosophical education, a philosophical education corrected and softened down by motherly feelings.

Physically, this education flowed in a great measure from Pythagoras and *Emilius.* Consequently, the greatest simplicity in dress and the most rigorous frugality in food formed its basis. My mother was convinced, and on this head I have retained her firm belief, that to kill animals for the purpose of feeding on their flesh is one of the most deplorable and shameful infirmities of the human state; that it is one of those curses cast upon man either by his fall, or by the obduracy of his own perversity. She believed, and I am of the same belief, that these habits of hard-heartedness towards the gentlest animals, our companions, our auxiliaries, our brethren in toil and even in affection here below; that these immolations, these sanguinary appetites, this sight of palpitating flesh, are calculated to brutalize the instincts of the heart and make them ferocious. She believed, and I am of the same belief, that this nurture, which is seemingly much more succulent and much more energetic, contains in itself active causes of irritation and putridity, which sour the blood and shorten the days of mankind. In support of these ideas of abstinence, she quoted the innumerable gentle and pious tribes of India who deny themselves all that has had life; and the strong and healthy races of the shepherds and even of the laboring classes of our fields, who work harder than any, who live more innocently than any, and who do not eat meat ten times in the course of their lives. She never allowed me to eat any until I attained the age at which I was thrown into the helter-skelter life of colleges. To kill the desire for it, even if it had existed within me, she used no arguments, but appealed to instinct, which reasons much more powerfully in our breasts than logic.

I had a lamb which had been given to me by a peasant of Milly, and which I had taught to follow me all over like the most affectionate and faithful of dogs. We loved one another with that first fondness which little children and young animals naturally have for one another. One day the cook said to my mother before me:—

"Madam, the lamb is fat, and the butcher has come for it; must I give it to him?"

I cried out upon it, threw myself before the lamb, and asked what the butcher wanted to do with it and what a butcher was. The cook answered that he was a man who killed lambs, sheep, little calves, and beautiful cows for money. I could hardly believe her. I prayed to my mother. I easily obtained that my little friend should be spared. A few days afterwards, my mother took me to town with her, and made me pass, as if by accident, through the yard of a slaughter-house. I saw some men, their arms naked and besmeared with blood, knocking a bull in the head; others cutting the throats of calves and sheep, and separating their still heaving limbs. Streams of smoking gore ran along the pavement. An intense feeling of pity, mingled with horror, seized upon me. I asked to be led away quickly. The thought of these scenes, the necessary preliminaries of one of those dishes of meat which I had so often seen on the table, made me take a disgust to animal food and inspired me with a horror for butchers. Although the necessity of complying with the rules of the society in which we live has made me eat, since then, all that other people eat, I have retained a repugnance, based on reason, to cooked flesh, and it has always been difficult for me not to see in the butcher's trade something of the executioner's occupation.

Until the age of twelve, then, I only lived on bread, milk-food, vegetables, and fruit. My health was not less robust on this account, nor my growth less rapid, and it was to this diet, perhaps, that I was indebted for that purity of feature, that exquisite sensibility of feeling, and that serene gentleness of humor and character which I had preserved up to that period.

NOTE IX.

As to my feelings and thoughts, my mother followed their natural development in me, and directed it without my per

ceiving it, and perhaps without perceiving it herself. Her system was not art, it was love. That is the reason why it was infallible. She especially took the greatest care to turn my thoughts incessantly towards God, and to make those thoughts so vivid by the constant presence and feeling of God in my soul, that my religion became a pleasure, and my faith a communion with the Invisible. It was impossible for her to fail, for her piety, like all her other virtues, had the nature of tenderness.

My mother was not exactly what is meant by a woman of genius in this age, in which women have raised themselves to such a great eminence of thought, style, and talent of every description. She never even laid claim to that title. She did not exercise her mind on those vast subjects. She never strained the easy and elastic springs of her active imagination by reflection; in her there was neither the vocation nor the art of the superior woman of the present day.

She never wrote for the sake of writing, still less for the sake of admiration, although she wrote a great deal for her own sake, and in order to find, at a future hour, in a register of her conscience and of the events of her domestic life, a moral mirror of herself, in which she often looked to compare herself with herself, and to make herself better. This habit of registering her life, which she indulged until the last moment, produced fifteen or twenty volumes of confidential disclosures made by her to God, which I have had the good fortune to preserve, and in which I find her, living and breathing, whenever I have need to take refuge again in her bosom.

She had read but little, through fear of corrupting the firm and obedient faith that she had in what she believed to be the voice of God. She did not write with that force of conception, and that brilliancy of imagery, which characterize the gift of expression. She spoke and wrote with the clear and smooth simplicity of a woman who never flatters herself, and who only asks words to express her thoughts with precision, as she only asked her garments to clothe her person, not adorn it. Her superiority was not in her head, but in her soul. It is in the hearts of women that God has placed their genius, because all the works of that genius are works of love. Tenderness, piety, courage, heroism, constancy, devotedness, forgetfulness of self, sensitive serenity, but overpowering by faith and force of will all that suffered within her; such were the features of that elevated genius which all those who ap-

proached her felt was in her life, and not in her written works. It was only in attraction that her superiority was felt. It was a superiority that was only acknowledged with adoration.

NOTE X.

The whole of her soul was an immense, tender, and consoling sense of the Infinite. It was too sensible, and too vast for the wretched and petty ambitions of this world. She was passing through it, not inhabiting it. That sense of the Infinite in all, and particularly in love, had converted itself for her into a perpetual invocation and aspiration to the One who was its source, that is to say, to God. It may be said that she lived in God as much as it is given to any human being to live in Him. There was not a single side of her soul that was not constantly turned towards Him, that was not made transparent, bright and warm by that radiant beam from above which flows directly from God upon our thoughts, and which penetrates into us through the darkness of our souls, as the light of heaven shines through the crystal of our closed dwellings. The result of this for her was a piety which was never overcast. She was not a devotee; she had none of that stupid dread of God, none of that puerility, of that subjection of the soul, none of that brutalization of the mind, which make up the sum of devotion with a great many women, and are in them only an infancy prolonged through life, or a morose, peevish, and jealous old age, which revenges itself on a sacred passion for the profane passions which they can no longer enjoy.

Her religion, like her genius, was entirely in her soul. She believed with humility, loved with ardor, hoped with constancy. Her faith was an act of virtue, not an act of reasoning. She considered it as a gift from God, received through the hands of her mother, which it would have been wrong to have scrutinized, and exposed to be wafted away by the winds of the high-road. At a later day, all the pleasures of prayer, all the tears of admiration, all the outpourings of her heart, all the solicitudes of her life, and all the hopes of her immortality, had so completely identified themselves with her faith, that, so to speak, they made part of it in her mind, and

that by losing or changing her belief she would have thought that she had lost at the same time her innocence, her virtue, her love, and her happiness here below, and her pledges of felicity above,—in a word, her earth and her heaven! Consequently, it was as dear to her as her heaven and her earth. Moreover, as some people are born poets, she was born pious; piety was her nature; love of God, her passion! But that passion, from the immensity of its Object, and from the very security of its enjoyment, was serene, happy, and tender, like all her other passions.

This piety was the part of herself which she most ardently wished to communicate to us. To make us creatures of God in spirit and in reality, was her most maternal thought. Even in this she succeeded without any system, and without any effort, and with that marvellous skill which nature imparts, and which no artifice can equal. Her piety, which flowed from every breath she drew, from every one of her actions, from every one of her gestures, enveloped us here below, so to speak, in a heavenly atmosphere. We thought that God was behind her, and that we would hear and see Him, as she herself seemed to hear and see and converse with Him at each hour of the day. God for us was as one of us. He was born in us, with our earliest and our most undefinable feelings. We remembered no time when we knew Him not; there was no first day on which His name had been mentioned to us. We had always seen Him between our mother and ourselves. His name had reached our lips with her milk, we had learned to talk by lisping it. As we grew up, those acts which make Him present and even perceptible to the soul, were performed twenty times a day before our eyes. At morn, at eve, before and after our meals, we were taught to make short prayers. Our mother's knees were for a long time our domestic altar. On those occasions her beaming countenance was always veiled with a respectful and somewhat solemn thoughtfulness, which impressed on our minds the solemnity of the act which we were performing. When she had prayed with us and over us, her beautiful face became more gentle and more tender than ever. We felt that she had communed with her strength and her joy, that she might have more of both to pour upon our heads.

BOOK V.

NOTE I.

All her lessons in religion were confined to being religious herself before us and with us. The perpetual effusion of love, adoration gratitude, and prayer which escaped from her soul was her only and natural preaching. Prayer, but rapid, lyrical, winged prayer, was mingled with the slightest acts of our days. That invocation was so appropriately associated with them that it was always a pleasure and refreshment, instead of being a duty and a fatigue. In the hands of that woman our life was a perpetual *sursum corda.* That life grew up as naturally in the thought of God as the plant grows up in the air and light. To that end, our mother did the contrary of what is ordinarily done. Instead of imposing on us a vexatious devotion which drags children from their pastimes or their slumber to force them to pray to God, and often through their repugnance and tears, she made those short invocations to which she smilingly invited us, feasts of the soul for us. She never mingled prayers with our tears, but with all the happy little events that occurred to us during the day. Thus, when we were awakened in our little beds, when the morning sun sparkled cheerfully on our windows, when the birds sang on our rose-bushes or in their cages, when the footsteps of the servants had been heard for a long time through the house, and when we were impatiently waiting for her, in order that we might rise, she would come up and enter with a face always beaming with goodness, affection, and gentle joy; she would help us to dress; she would listen to that delightful little prattle of children whose refreshed imagination warbles in the morning, as the young swallows in the nest on the house-top twitter joyously when the parent-bird approaches; then she would say to us:

"To whom do we owe the happiness we are about to enjoy together? To God, to our Heavenly Father. Without His will, this beautiful sun would not have arisen perhaps; these trees would have lost their leaves; the gay birds would have died of hunger and cold on the bare earth; and you, my poor children, would neither have had a bed, nor a house, nor a garden, nor a mother to shelter and feed you, and to gladden

all your season of life! It is very just to thank Him for all that He gives us with this day, and to entreat Him to grant us a great many more days like the present."

Then she would kneel in front of our bed, join our little hands, and, often kissing them as she held them within her own, slowly breathe in a low tone the morning prayer, which we would repeat with her inflections of voice and her words.

In the evening she would not wait until our slumber-burdened eyelids were half closed, to make us mutter as in a dream the words that painfully delayed the hour of rest for us; directly after supper she would call together in the parlor, the domestics, and even the peasants who inhabited the nearest cottages and who were on the most friendly terms at the house. She would open a book of pious Christian instruction for the people, and read a few short passages to her rustic auditory. This reading was followed by the prayer spoken by her in a loud tone of voice, or which my young sisters, when they were more advanced in years, said in her stead. Even now I can hear the burden of those monotonous litanies which rolled with a hollow noise beneath the beams, and which were like the regular ebb and flood of the heart's waves beating against the shores of life and the ears of God.

One of us was always deputed in turn to say a short prayer for travellers, for the poor, for the sick, and for some particular want of the village or the mansion. By thus giving us a little part to perform in the serious act of prayer, she interested us in it by associating us with it, and kept us from looking upon it as a cold habit, a vain ceremony, or even with distaste. Besides these two prayers, which were almost public, the remainder of our day often had frequent and irregular elevations of our young souls to God. But those prayers, born of chance in the heart or on the lips of our mother, were only the inspirations of the moment; there was nothing about them that was regular or tiresome for us. On the contrary, they completed, so to speak, and consecrated our impressions and our enjoyments.

Thus, when a frugal, but for us, delicious repast was laid upon the table, our mother, ere she seated herself and broke bread, made a little sign to us, which we understood. We would curb the impatience of our appetite for half a minute, to entreat God to bless the food which He gave us. After the meal, and before we went to play, we would return thanks in a few words. If we started for a long and earnestly-desired

walk on a fair summer's morn, our mother, ere we left her, would make us make, in a low tone, a short invocation to God, praying Him to bless that great delight and preserve us from all harm. If our steps led us before some sublime or graceful spectacle of nature that was new to us, in some deep and dark forest of pines, where the solemnity of the shade, the spatterings of light through the branches, startled our youthful imaginations; in front of some beautiful sheet of water rolling in cascades and dazzling us with its foam, its movement, and its noise; if a magnificent sunset covered the mountains with groups of clouds of unusual shapes and hues, and as it returned into space, took resplendent leave of the little corner of the globe which it had illumined for a moment; she rarely failed to take advantage of the depth or the novelty of our feelings to make us elevate our souls to the Author of all those marvels, and to put us in communion with Him by some of the lyrical sighs of her perpetual adoration.

When walking with us on a summer evening through the fields in which we used to gather flowers, insects, and sparkling pebbles in the bed of the rivulet of Milly, how often has she not made us seat ourselves beside her, at the foot of a weeping-willow, and, with heart overflowing with pious enthusiasm, discoursed to us a moment upon the religious and hidden meaning of that beautiful creation which delighted our eyes and our hearts! I know not whether her explanations of nature, of the elements, of the power of the planets, of the use of insects, were wholly according to science. She used to take them from Pluche, Buffon, and Bernardin de St. Pierre; but if no irreproachable systems of nature came from them, they used to produce an immense sentiment of Providence, and draw from our minds a religious benediction on that infinite ocean of the wisdom and mercy of God.

When our feelings were well aroused by her sublime commentaries, when tears of admiration began to dim our eyes, she would not allow those grateful drops to be dried by the wind of trivial amusements and flighty thoughts; she would hasten to turn all that enthusiasm of contemplation into love. A few verses of the Psalms (of David) which she knew by heart, and which were suited to the impressions of the scene, would fall compunctiously from her lips. They gave a pious meaning to all the earth, and a divine expression to all our feelings.

NOTE II.

On our return, she would almost always make us pass in front of the humble dwellings of the sick or the poor of the village. She would approach their beds, and give them advice and medicine. She culled her prescriptions from Tissot or from Buchan, those two popular physicians. She studied medicine with assiduity in order to minister to the indigent. She had the instinctive genius of all real physicians, a sharp and quick eye, and a successful hand. We used to help her when she made her daily visits. One of us would carry the lint and aromatic oils for the wounded; the other, bandages for compresses. We thus learned to overcome those repugnances which, at a later day, make man weak beside the couch of sickness, useless to those who suffer, timid before the dying. She never removed us from the most hideous spectacles of poverty, suffering, and even death. I have often seen her standing, sitting, or kneeling beside the cottage pallets, or in the stables where peasants lie when they are old and feeble, and with her own hands wipe away the cold sweat from the brows of the dying poor, turn them beneath their covering, recite the prayers of the last moments to them, and patiently wait hours together until their souls had sped to God on the wings of her sweet voice.

She also used to make us the ministers of her charity. We were incessantly occupied—I especially, being the largest—in carrying to the distant and isolated houses in the mountains, at one time a little white bread for the women who were lying-in, at another a bottle of old wine and pieces of sugar, or some strengthening broth for old men exhausted from want of food. These trifling errands were even pleasures and rewards for us. All the peasants within two or three leagues knew us. They never saw us pass without calling us by our Christian names which were familiar to them, without asking us to enter their dwellings, and accept a piece of bread, bacon, or cheese. The whole canton knew us as the sons of *the Lady*, the messengers of good tidings, the ministering angels to all the forsaken sufferings of the country folk. Wherever we entered, a Providence, a hope, a consolation, a gleam of joy and charity entered with us. These sweet habits of intimacy with all the unfortunate, and of familiar entrance into all the dwellings of the inhabitants of the country, made a real family for us of

all those children of the fields. We knew every one by name, in that little world, from the oldest to the youngest. In the morning, the stone steps in front of the principal entrance to Milly and the corridor were always besieged by the sick, or their relatives, who came to get recipes from our mother. After us, it was to this that her mornings were devoted. She was always busy compounding some medicinal preparations for the poor, grinding herbs, making ptisans, weighing drugs in small scales, and often even dressing the most disgusting wounds and sores. In all this she employed us, and we helped according to our strength. Others search alembics for gold; our mother only searched them to find wherewith to relieve the infirmities of the wretched, and by so doing more surely amassed in heaven the only treasure she ever coveted here below—the blessings of the poor and the will of God.

NOTE III.

When all these traces of the day were at length hushed, when we had dined, when the neighbors who sometimes came to visit us had withdrawn, and when the shadow of the mountain, stretching over the little garden, covered it with the twilight of the day that was about to end, my mother would leave us for a moment. She would leave us either in the little parlor, or in a corner of the garden at a distance from her. She would then take her hour of solitary repose and meditation. Young as we were, we knew the hour which of all hours was reserved for her. We quite naturally kept aloof from the path in the garden through which she used to walk, as if we feared to interrupt or overhear the mysterious communions between her and God, and God and her! It was a little walk strewed with sand of a reddish yellow, bordered with strawberry-plants which grew between fruit-trees that were hardly higher than her head. A large clump of hazel-trees stood at one end of the path, a wall at the other. It was the least frequented and most sheltered part of the garden. This is the reason why she preferred it; for what she saw in that walk was in her own bosom and not in the horizon of the earth. She used to tread it at a rapid, but

very regular pace, like a person who thinks vigorously, who is advancing towards a certain end, and whose step is bucyed up by enthusiasm. Her head was generally bare; her beautiful black tresses half abandoned to the winds; her countenance somewhat more solemn than during the rest of the day, now slightly bent towards the earth, anon raised towards heaven, where her eyes seemed to seek for the first stars that were beginning to stand out from the blue of night in the firmament. Her arms were naked from the elbow: her hands were at one time clasped as if in prayer; at another, free, and heedlessly plucking a rose or a violet mallow-flower from the high bushes which grew on either edge of the walk. Sometimes her lips were apart and motionless, sometimes they were closed and moved almost imperceptibly, like those of a person speaking in a dream.

She would stroll in this manner for half an hour, more or less, according to the beauty of the evening, her leisure, or the abundance of her internal inspiration; and, during that time, walk to and fro two or three hundred times. What was she doing? You have guessed it. She was living for a moment in God alone. She voluntarily separated herself from all that was dear to her here below, to seek, in an anticipated communion with the Creator, and in the very bosom of His works, that celestial refreshment which the soul that suffers and loves needs, to give it strength to suffer and love still more.

What God said to her, is known to God alone; what she said to God we know almost as well as herself. Acknowledgments, teeming with sincerity and compunction, of the slight faults which she had possibly committed in the discharge of her duties during the day; tender reproaches, self-administered, to encourage herself to act more in accordance with the divine graces of her situation; passionate thanks to Providence for some of those small joys which had reached her through us: her son who had shown indications of happy inclinations; her daughters who were growing beautiful under her eyes; her husband who, by his admirable intelligence and orderly conduct, had slightly increased our small fortune and the future welfare of the family; then the grain, which gave promise of a fair crop; the vines, our principal riches, whose sweet-scented buds perfumed the air and also promised an abundant vintage; some sudden, ravishing contemplation of the grandeur of the firmament, of the hosts of stars, of the

fairness of the weather, of the organization of flowers and insects, of the maternal instincts of the birds, many of whose nests (respected by us) were to be seen between the branches of our trees and rose-bushes. All these things, heaped up in her heart like the first-fruits on the altar, and lighted by the fire of her juvenile enthusiasm, escaped in glances, in sighs, in a few unnoticed gestures, and in verses of the Psalms murmured in a low tone! This is what was heard only by the grass, the trees, the leaves, and the flowers, in that walk of meditation.

NOTE IV.

This walk was looked upon by us as a sanctuary in a holy spot, as a chapel in the garden where God himself visited her. We never dared to play in it; although it had never been forbidden to us, we left it wholly to its mysterious use. Even at the present day,—after the lapse of so many years, during which shade only has visited it,—whenever I go into that garden, I respect my mother's walk. I bow my head when I cross it; but through fear of obliterating the traces left by her, I never walk in it.

When she left that sanctuary of her soul and returned towards us, her eyes would be wet, her face more serene and more tranquil than usual. The smile which was ever on her charming lips would seem more gracious and loving. It might have been said that she had cast off a load of gloom or of adoration, and that she walked with a lighter step to the duties of the remainder of the day.

NOTE V.

Meanwhile I was advancing in years; I was ten. It was high time to begin to teach me some of the things which are known by mankind. My mother only instructed my heart and framed my mind. It was necessary to learn Latin. The old pastor of a neighboring village (for the living at Milly had been sold, and the church was closed) had a small school for the instruction of the children of a few peasants who were in easy cir-

cumstances. They used to send me thither in the morning. In a satchel thrown across my shoulder, I carried a piece of bread and a few fruits, to breakfast with my little companions. Like the others, I also carried under my arm a small fagot of sticks or of vine-twigs to feed the fire of the poor rector. The village of Bussières, where he officiated in a small church, lies at a quarter of a league from the hamlet of Milly, at the bottom of a charming valley which is overlooked on one side by vineyards and walnut-trees, and extends on the other towards lovely meadows which are watered by a small stream and intersected by small clumps of oaks and groups of old chestnut-trees. The manse, with its garden, yard, and well, was hid behind the walls of the church, and completely shrouded in the shadow of the large steeple.

Towards the south, however, an outside gallery a few paces long, the roof of which was supported by pillars made of small tree-trunks with their bark on, led to the kitchen and to a parlor, which the old man had turned into a school-room for us. I can yet hear the noise of our little wooden shoes clattering on the stone steps which led to the gallery. There were six or seven children of us who used to come from Milly every day, in all sorts of weather. The more rainy or the colder the weather, the more amusing was the walk for us, and the more we used to prolong it. Between Bussières and Milly, there is a steep hill whose slope, through a path of loose stones, descends into the valley of the parsonage. In the winter time, this path was a deep bed of snow or a glacis of ice down which we used to roll or slide in imitation of the Alpine shepherds. Below, the meadows overrun by the stream, were often lakes of ice, interrupted only by the black trunk of a willow. We had found the means to obtain skates, and by much practice, and after many falls, we had learned how to make use of them. It was there that I was seized with a downright passion for that exercise of the North, in which I afterwards became very skilful. To feel one's self carried off with the swiftness of the arrow and the graceful undulations of the bird in mid-air, on a smooth, resplendent, sonorous, and perfidious surface; to give one's self, by a simple movement of the body, and, so to speak, with nought but one's will for a rudder, all the motions of a bark on the deep or of an eagle soaring in the blue heavens, was for me and would yet be, if I did not respect my own age, such an intoxication of the senses, and produced such a

voluptuous dizziness in the brain, that I cannot think of it without emotion. Even horses, for which I have had such a strong liking, do not give their riders that melancholy delirium which skaters find on the frozen bosom of a large lake. How often have I not sent up prayers that winter, with its resplendent but cold sun sparkling on the blue ice of the boundless meadows of the Saône, might be eternal, like our pleasures!

It will readily be believed that with such companions and such a road to travel, we would often arrive somewhat late. The aged pastor never treated us any the worse on that account. Bowed down by age and infirmities, the old man—who had been a man of the world, rich and stylish, before the Revolution, and who, since, had suffered the pangs of deprivation and want—had little taste for the society of the giddy, noisy children he had undertaken to instruct. All that the good man required from us, was the small recompense which the generosity of our parents added, no doubt, to the trifling perquisites of his church. On the other hand, he relieved himself of the burden of our education by transferring it to a young and sprightly curate who lived with him in the manse, and whom he treated more like a son than an inferior. This curate's name was the Abbé Dumont. The remainder of the family consisted of a woman already advanced in years, but still handsome and pleasing. This woman was the young Abbé's mother. She governed the household of the two ministers with gentle and sovereign sway, and with the assistance of a pretty niece and an old churchwarden, who used to split the wood, delve in the garden, and toll the bell.

The Abbé Dumont,—about whom I shall have a great deal to say hereafter, because we were warmly attached to one another, and because one of the adventures of his youth inspired me with the thought of *Jocelyn*,—had nothing of the priest about him save an utter dislike for an office into which he had been thrust in spite of himself, on the very eve of the day when the priesthood was about to be ruined in France. He did not even wear the priest's garb. His tastes were those of a gentleman; his habits, those of a soldier; his manners, those of a man accustomed to the highest society. Handsome in feature, tall in stature, noble in mien, grave and melancholy in the expression of his physiognomy, he always spoke to his mother affectionately, to the pastor respectfully, and to us disdainfully and authoritatively. He was always surrounded by three or four beautiful hunting-dogs, his constant

companions in the house as well as in the woods, of which he took more notice than he did of his scholars. Two or three guns, sparkling with cleanliness, and ornamented with plates of silver, shone in the corner near the chimney; flasks and pouches filled with powder, balls, and shot, lay in confusion on all the tables. In his hand he generally carried a long leather whip, with an ivory handle terminating in a whistle or dog-call, to be used in the mountains. Several swords and hunting-knives were to be seen hanging around the walls,—and large riding-boots, armed with long silver spurs, and carefully blacked and polished, stood in the corners of the room. His air, the manly and firm tone of his voice, and these accoutrements, made you feel that his natural character was revenging itself by outward show on the contradiction between his nature and his office.

He was learned, and numerous books scattered about on the chairs gave evidence of his literary tastes. But these books, as well as the furniture of the room, were not very canonical. There were volumes of Raynal, J. J. Rousseau, and Voltaire; some of the novels of the day, and anti-revolutionary pamphlets and newspapers. For, though he was not much of an ecclesiastic, the Abbé Dumont was a stanch royalist. His chimney-piece was strewed with busts and engravings of the unfortunate Louis XVI., the Queen, the Dauphin, the illustrious victims of the Revolution. With the greater part of the men of that period, all that hatred of the Revolution and all that philosophy which had produced the Revolution, were easily reconciled then. The Revolution had satisfied their doctrines and driven them from their positions. Like the new order of things, their souls were in a state of chaos, through which they could not find their way.

It is easy to credit, with such a picture to gaze at, that our instruction could not progress rapidly between an infirm gray-beard who spent his days warming himself by the kitchen fire, and a young man who was eager for action and enjoyment, and who considered the hours curtailed from hunting-time, for our sake, hours of torment. It was confined, during the whole year, to teaching us two or three declensions of Latin words, whose terminations, in fact, were all that we could understand. The remainder of the time was taken up by skating in winter, swimming in the mill-dams in summer, and frequenting all the weddings and festivals in the neighboring villages, where we always received the cakes which are

customarily given on such occasions, and where we fired off the numberless pistol-shots which are the signs of rejoicing in all the countries in the world.

I spoke the dialect of the country as fluently as my mother-tongue, and none better than I knew by heart the traditional songs which are so simple, and which, in our rural districts, are sung at night beneath the window of the room or at the door of the stable in which sleeps the bride.

NOTE VI.

Notwithstanding that completely peasant-like life, and that absolute ignorance of all that other children know at that age, my domestic education, under the supervision of my mother, made me one of the most upright minds, one of the most loving hearts, one of the most docile children imaginable. My life was composed of liberty, invigorating exercises, and simple pleasures; but not of dangerous improprieties. Without my knowledge, my companions and friends were chosen for me from amongst the children of the most honest and irreproachable families in the village. Some of the oldest of them were, to a certain extent, responsible for me. I received neither bad counsels nor bad examples amongst them. The respect and love which all those people felt for my father and my mother was reflected on me—the whole country was so much like one family, so to speak, whose favorite child I was.

I would never have thought of wishing for any other sort of life. My mother, who dreaded the danger of a public education for me, also desired eternally to prolong that happy childhood. But my father and his brothers, of whom I will soon have to speak, saw with anxiety that I was about to reach my twelfth year and the age of adolescence, and that manhood would surprise me with too great an inferiority of instruction and discipline to men of my years and station. They expressed their fears aloud. I heard the earnest representations made on that subject to my poor mother. She wept often. The tempest would pass and exhaust itself against the firmness of her love and the energy of her will, which was so pliant, and yet so constant. But the storm returned every day.

The elder of my uncles was a man of the old school; he was good, but not in the slightest degree tender-hearted. Reared in the stern, strict school of military life, the only kind of education he understood was education in common. He wished men to be formed by contact with their fellow-men; he feared that this motherly love, always interposed between the child and the realities of life, would enervate manliness of character too much. Moreover, he was well-informed—I may even say learned,—and an author. He saw very clearly that in my father's house I would never learn ought else than how to live well and happily. He was desirous of more.

My father, who was of a more indulgent nature, and more under the influence of material ideas, would never have made up his mind by himself to exile me from Milly; but the persistency of my uncles gained the day. They were the kings of the family, and his oracles: something like the baillie of Mirabeau, in that great man's family. The welfare of the family was in that uncle's hands, for he governed his brothers and sisters. He was not married; it was necessary to treat him with deference and care. His sway, which, like the authority of the master of a house at that period, was somewhat despotic, was exercised with a supremacy which was strengthened by his distinguished merit, and by the importance with which he was invested. Out of prudence, and love for her children, my mother yielded. My doom was sealed, but not without much procrastination, and many tears.

For a long time search was made for a college where religious principles, which my mother so dearly prized, were united with sound instruction and paternal treatment. They thought that they had found all this in an educational establishment which was then celebrated at Lyons. My mother conducted me thither herself. I entered it as the criminal condemned to death enters his last cell. The false smiles, the hypocritical caresses of the masters of that boarding-school, who wished to imitate a father's heart for money, did not deceive me. I saw how much venality there was in that assumed affection. For the first time in my life, my heart felt as if it would break, and when the iron gate was closed between my mother and I, I knew that I was entering another world, and that the honeymoon of my first years had flown away, never to return.

BOOK VI.

NOTE I.

Picture to yourself a gentle bird, free and wild, in possession of its nest, the woods, the sky, in communion with all the pleasures of nature, space, and freedom, suddenly caught in the fowler's snare, and compelled to fold its wings and wound its feet between the bars of the narrow cage into which it has just been thrust, along with other birds of different species, whose plumage and discordant cries it sees and hears for the first time, and you will have an idea, but still an imperfect one, of what my feelings were during the first months of my captivity.

Maternal education had given me an expansive, sincere, and loving soul. I did not know what it was to fear—I only knew how to love. Her authority had never clashed with any one of my wishes, which were always in conformity with her own. I only knew the gentle and natural persuasion which flowed for me from her lips, her eyes, her slightest gesture. She was not my master—she was more: my very will. This healthy regimen of the paternal roof,—where the sole law was to love one another, where the sole fear was the fear to displease, where the sole punishment was a saddened brow,—had made me a very sensitive child, very easily affected by the least harshness, keenly alive to any thing that could wound the heart. From this nest, which was so softly feathered, and so warmly lined with the love of an incomparable family, I fell upon the cold, hard earth of a tumultuous school, peopled by two hundred jeering, mischievous, vicious children, who were unknown to me, and who were governed by rough, violent, and selfish masters, whose honeyed but nauseous words did not deceive me with regard to their indifference, even for a single day.

I took a dislike, a disgust to them. I looked upon them as jailers. I spent the hours of recreation in looking, alone and mournfully, between the bars of a long grating which enclosed the yard, at the sky and the wooded brows of the mountains of the Beaujolais, and in sighing for the happiness and liberty

which I had lost. The sports of my schoolfellows made me sad; their very faces were repulsive to me. Every thing around me breathed an air of malice, trickery, and corruption, that made me feel sick at heart. The moroseness into which I was thrown by my sudden immersion in the depths of this sink of children, was such, that thoughts of suicide,—although I had never heard that subject even mentioned,—assailed me with great violence. I recollect to have spent days and nights in searching for the means to deprive myself of a life which I could no longer bear. This state of mind did not cease one instant during the whole time that I remained in that establishment.

NOTE II.

After a few months of this sort of torture, I determined to effect my escape. I calculated my means of flight for a long time, and with considerable skill. At length, at the hour when the parlor door was opened to admit the parents who came to visit their children, I took care to be in the apartment. I pretended to have thrown the ball with which I had been playing, into the street. I rushed out as if to get it. I closed the door violently, and sped with all the fleetness of my legs through the narrow lanes, lined with walls and gardens, which run through the faubourg of Croix-Rousse, at Lyons. I soon distanced the watchman who was in pursuit of me, and when I reached the woods which cover the banks of the Saône, between Neuville and Lyons, I slackened my pace, and seated myself at the foot of a tree to take breath and reflect.

All the money that I had in my pocket was three francs in small coin. I knew full well that I would be badly received by my father; but I said to myself:

"My flight will have this good effect at any rate—they will not be able to send me back to the same school."

Besides, I did not intend to present myself to my father. My plan was to go to Milly, and seek an asylum in the house of one of those honest peasants, by whom I was so well known and loved; or even in the kennel of the large watch-dog in the court-yard of the house, where I had so often spent whole hours with him, stretched upon the straw; while there, I

would have had my mother informed of my return; she would have mollified my father; they would have received and pardoned me, and I would have resumed my delightful life by their side.

It was doomed to be otherwise. I set out again, and reached a little town distant about six leagues from Lyons, where I entered a tavern and ordered dinner. But hardly had I seated myself in front of the omelet and cheese which a good woman had prepared for me, when the door was pushed open by the principal of the boarding-school, who entered with a gendarme at his heels. They arrested me, pinioned my hands, and brought me back to the school through the shame which was awakened in me by the curiosity of the villagers. They confined me all alone in a sort of dungeon. Here I spent two months without communicating with a living being, except the Director, however, who strove in vain to make me sign an act of repentance. My firmness at length tired them out, and they sent me back to my parents. I was badly received by the whole family, with the exception of my poor mother. She obtained a promise that I should not be again sent to Lyons. A college, under the direction of Jesuits, (at Belley, on the frontier of Savoy,) was in great repute at that time, not only in France, but even in Italy, Germany, and Switzerland. My mother conveyed me to it.

NOTE III.

When I entered it, I felt in a few days the prodigious difference that there is between a venal education bestowed upon unfortunate children, for the love of gold, by teaching speculators, and an education given in the name of God and inspired by a religious devotedness whose sole reward is heaven. I did not find a mother there; but I found God, purity, prayer, charity, gentle and paternal superintendence, the benevolent tone of the domestic hearth, loving and beloved children with happy countenances. I had been imbittered and hardened; I allowed myself to be soothed and captivated. I bent of my own will to a yoke which excellent masters knew how to make easy and light. Their only art consisted in making us take an interest in the success of the establishment, and in leading us

by our own will and our own enthusiasm. A Divine spirit seemed to animate both teachers and disciples with the same breath. All our souls had recovered their wings, and flew naturally towards the Good and the Beautiful. The most refractory themselves were raised up and carried away in the general movement. It was there that I discovered what can be done with men, not by constraining them, but by inspiring them. The religious feeling which animated our teachers animated us all. They had the art to make that feeling apparent and worthy of love, and to create in us a passionate love of God. With such a lever placed in our own hearts, they could raise every thing. As to themselves, their love for us was not pretended; they loved us really, truly, as saints love their duty, as workmen love their labor, as the haughty love their pride. They began by making me happy; they were not long in making me good. Piety was rekindled in my soul. It became the main-spring of my application to study. I formed intimate friendships with children of my own age, who were as pure and as happy as I. These friendships, so to speak, reconstructed a family for us. As I had entered the lower classes somewhat late, since I had already seen my twelfth birthday, I advanced rapidly towards the higher ones. In three years, I had completed my studies. Each year I returned home loaded with all the first prizes of my class. These made me happy for my mother's sake, but did not make me proud for my own. My companions and rivals forgave all my triumphs, because they seemed natural, and because I did not feel them myself. My mother and liberty were all that I required to be completely happy.

NOTE IV.

And yet I was never able to school my soul to servitude, no matter how much it was softened by friendship and the favor of my teachers, and by the benevolent popularity with which I was surrounded by my fellow-students at college. That freedom of the eye, of the limbs, of movement, which I had so long enjoyed in the country, made the walls of the college seem darker and narrower to me. I was a somewhat happier captive than others, but I was still a captive. During the hours of free converse, the only subject which I discussed with my friends

was the happiness of soon leaving that place of confinement, and of again possessing the heavens, nature, the fields, the woods, the streams, the mountains of our paternal dwellings. I had the perpetual fever of freedom, the delirium of nature.

The high window of the dormitory nearest my bed opened on a green valley of the Bugey, carpeted with meadows, bordered by beech-tree woods, and terminated by bluish mountains, up the sides of which you could see the damp, white vapor of distant cascades rising. Often, when my companions slumbered, when the night was clear, and when the moon shone in the sky, often would I get up without noise, climb the bars in the back of a chair, which would serve me as a ladder, and lean my elbows for hours on the sill of that window, to gaze lovingly at that horizon of silence, solitude, and meditation. My soul would spring with indescribable bounds towards those meads, those woods, those streams; it seemed to me that it would have been supreme felicity if my feet could have wandered through them, at will, as my eyes and thoughts did; and if, in the sighing of the wind, in the song of the nightingale, in the rustling of the leaves, in the distant and oft-repeated murmurs of the waterfalls, in the tinkle of the cow-bells on the mountains, I could catch some of the wild notes, some of the recollections of the ear of my childhood's days at Milly, tears of remembrance, of ecstasy, would trickle down my cheeks, and fall upon the window-stone; and I would return to my couch to contemplate in silence, in my waking dreams, the dazzling images of those visions.

They mingled themselves more and more each day in my soul with thoughts and visions of heaven. Ever since adolescence had disturbed, softened, and saddened my imagination, by agitating my senses, a sort of wild melancholy had cast something like a veil over my natural cheerfulness, and given a solemn tone to my thoughts as well as my voice. My impressions had become so vivid that they were painful. This vague gloom which every thing earthly made me feel had turned my thoughts towards the infinite. The highly religious education which we received amongst the Jesuits, the frequent prayers, the meditations, the sacraments, the oft-repeated and prolonged pious ceremonies, rendered more attractive by the decorations of the altar; the splendor of the dresses, the chanting, the incense, the flowers, the music, operated on our childish and youthful imaginations as sensual seductions which may be compared to the religious infatuations of the East. The ecclesiastics who

lavished them upon us were the first to give themselves up to them with the sincerity and fervor of their faith. Under the influence of the prejudices and the antipathy which had been awakened against my first teachers by my sojourn at the seminary in Lyons, I resisted them in the beginning for some time. But gentleness, tenderness of soul, and the insinuating persuasion of a better course of treatment, under new masters, were not long in acting with the omnipotence of their teachings on the imagination of a lad fifteen years old. Near them I unconsciously recovered the natural piety which my mother had made me imbibe with her milk. By recovering piety, I recovered quietude of mind, order and resignation of soul, regularity of life, the taste for study, the knowledge of my duties, the sense of communication with God, the pleasures of meditation and prayer, the love of communion with self, and those ecstasies of adoration in the presence of God to which nothing on earth can be compared, save the ecstasies of a first pure love. But divine love, if it has less of intoxication and voluptuousness, has more of the infinitude and eternity of the Being that is adored! It has, besides, His perpetual presence before the eyes and in the soul of the worshipper. I enjoyed it in all its ardor and in all its immensity.

The traces it afterwards left in me were like those which are left by a conflagration on one who has passed through it: a dimness of sight and the scar of a burn on the heart. It changed the character of my countenance: the somewhat giddy levity of childhood was succeeded by a tender and gentle gravity, by that thoughtful concentration of the gaze and the features which gives a unity and a moral meaning to the face. I looked like a statue of Adolescence, torn for a moment from the shelter of the altar to be offered as a model to young men. The thoughtfulness of the sanctuary surrounded me even in my sports and in my friendly intercourse with my companions. They approached me with a certain deference, they loved me with reserve.

In *Jocelyn,* under the name of an imaginary character, I have depicted all that I myself felt of restrained warmth of soul, of pious enthusiasm spent in flights of thought, in effusions, and in tears of adoration before God, during those fiery years of youth spent in a monastic establishment. All my future passions which were yet but presentiments; all my powers to feel, understand, and love, which were yet in their germ; all the delights and all the sufferings of my life, which

was yet but a dream, had concentrated, collected, and condensed themselves, as I may say, in that love for God, as if to offer to the Creator, in the springtime of my life, the first-fruits, the fires, and the perfumes of an existence which had not yet been profaned.

Were I to live a thousand years I would never forget certain hours of the evening when, escaping during the recreation of the students in the court-yard, I used to enter, through a small private door, the church already filled with night's shadows, and hardly lighted at the back of the choir by the lamp which hung in the sanctuary; I would hide myself in the still thicker gloom cast upon the pavement by one of the pillars; wrap myself as closely in my cloak as if it were a winding-sheet; lean my forehead against the cold marble of a balustrade, and, for a number of minutes, whose flight I no longer heeded, remain buried in a trance of mute but inexhaustible adoration, during which I no longer felt the earth beneath my knees or under my feet, but lost myself in God, like the mote which, attracted by the heat of a summer day, rises, swims, loses itself in the floating atmosphere, and, becoming as transparent as ether, seems as aërial as the air itself, and as brilliant as light!

That warm serenity of soul flowing from piety did not expire within me during the four years which I yet devoted to the completion of my studies. And still I ardently wished for their expiration, in order to return to my home and recover the freedom of country life. That constant aspiration for home and my native fields was, in fact, a more powerful stimulus than emulation. At the expiration of each completed course of study I fancied I saw the doors of my prison open. It was that which made me advance with rapid strides and outstrip my competitors. For the crowns with which I was rewarded and literally overloaded at the end of the year, I was solely indebted to my passionate impatience to put an end to that exile to which childhood is condemned. When there would be nothing more for me to learn at college, they would have to bring me back home, of course.

That wished-for day at length came round. It was one of the happiest of my life. I bade farewell with gratitude to the excellent teachers who had known how to vivify my soul and at the same time form my mind, and who, so to speak, had made their love for God vent itself in love and in zeal for the souls of His children. Fathers Desbrosses, Varlet, Bequet,

and Wrintz, in particular, more my friends than my preceptors, always remained in my memory as models of sanctity, vigilance, paternity, tenderness, and grace for their pupils. With me their names shall always form a part of that family of the soul to which we are not indebted for blood and flesh, but for mind, taste, manners, and feeling.

I do not like the institution of the Jesuits. Reared in their midst, I could discern, even at that period, the spirit of seduction, pride, and tyranny which opportunely hides or reveals itself in their policy; and which, by immolating each member for the good of the body, and by confounding that body with religion, skilfully substitutes itself for God and aspires to give a superannuated sect the control of consciences and the universal government of the human mind. But those abstract vices of the institution do not authorize me to efface from my heart truth, justice, and gratitude for the merit and the virtue which I have seen breathe and bloom in their teachings and in the instructors intrusted by them with the care of our childhood. The human influence was felt in all their relations with the world; the divine influence was felt in all their relations with us.

Their zeal was so ardent that it could only be ignited by a supernatural and divine principle. Their belief was sincere; their life pure, austere, and offered as a sacrifice at each moment, and until the last, to their duty and their God. If their faith had been less superstitious and less puerile, if their doctrines had been less impervious to that eternal Catholicism —Reason, I would look upon the men I have just mentioned as the most worthy masters to touch with pious hands the delicate souls of childhood; I would look upon their institute as a model and example for all teaching bodies. Voltaire, who was also one of their pupils, did them the same justice. He honored the instructors of his youth in the enemies of human philosophy. Like him, I honor and venerate them in their virtues. Truth has no need to calumniate the smallest virtue in order to triumph through falsehood. That would be the jesuitism of philosophy. It is by truth that reason must triumph.

At last, after the year called the philosophy-year—a year during which they torture with stupid and barbarous sophisms the natural good sense of youth, to make it bend to the reigning dogmas and institutions—I left college never to enter it again. I did not quit it without gratitude for my excellent masters; but I left it with the intoxication of a captive who loves his jailers without regretting the walls of his prison. I

was about to plunge into the ocean of liberty for which I had incessantly aspired! Oh! how attentively were counted the hours of the last days of that last week at the end of which our liberation was to take place! I did not wait to be sent for from home; I set out in company with three boys of my own age who were returning to their firesides like myself, and whose parents lived in the vicinage of Macon. We carried our small luggage on our shoulders, and we halted in each village and stopped at each farm in the wild gorges of the Bugey. The mountains, the torrents, the cascades, the ruins on the rocks, the cottages beneath the pine and beech trees in that really Alpine country, drew from us our first cries of admiration for nature. They were our Greek and Latin verses translated by God himself in imagery full of life and grandeur —a ramble through the poetry of creation. The whole of that journey homewards was an intoxication.

NOTE V.

Returning to Milly a few days before the fall of the leaves, I thought that I would never be able to exhaust the torrents of inward felicity with which my breast was filled by the feeling of liberty in the home of my childhood, in the bosom of my family. It was the winning of my manhood. My mother had had a small chamber prepared for me alone, in a corner of the house, whose window looked out upon the solitary hazel-tree walk. In it there was a bed, a table, a row of shelves against the wall for my books. My father had bought me the three things which complete the manly outfit of a youth—a watch, a gun, and a horse,—as if to tell me that thenceforward, the hours, the fields, and space were mine. I took possession of my independence with a delirium which lasted several months. The days were spent in hunting in company with my father, tending my horse in the stable, or galloping, with my hand in his mane, through the neighboring meadows and vales; the evenings were devoted to sweet domestic intercourse, in the parlor, with my mother, my father, some friends of the family; or to reading aloud the works of historians and poets.

Besides those instructive books to whose perusal my father

unaffectedly directed my curiosity, I had others which I used to read by myself. I had not been tardy in discovering the existence, in the town, of circulating libraries where books were hired by the inhabitants of neighboring farms. These books, procured on Sundays, became for me the inexhaustible source of solitary delectations. I had heard their titles mentioned at college in the conversations of the young men who were more advanced in age and instruction than myself. I formed a complete imaginary Eden of that world of thought, of those poems and romances, the perusal of which had been interdicted to us by the just severity of our studies.

The moment when that Eden was thrown open to me, when I entered a circulating library for the first time, when I was free to lay my hand as I pleased on those ripe, green, or rotten fruits of the tree of knowledge, made me dizzy. I thought that I had entered the storehouse of the human mind. Alas! alas! how soon are the real treasures of that storehouse exhausted! and how many false stones fell one by one beneath my hands amid disenchantment and disgust, instead of the marvellous gems I there had hoped to find!

The feelings of piety which my education had given me, and the fear of offending the chaste and religious scruples of my mother, prevented me, nevertheless, from allowing my hands and my eyes to wander over that poison of the soul, the depraved, or suspicious books with which the end of the last century and the ribald materialism of the Empire had overflowed the libraries of that period. I opened them with burning cheeks, with timid curiosity, and closed them again with horror. The doctrine of the cynics is the Ideal reversed, the parody of physical and moral beauty, the crime of mind, the degradation of imagination. I could not take pleasure in it. There was too much enthusiasm within me to permit me to crawl through those sinks of the brain. My nature had wings. The dangers to which I was exposed were above, not below.

But I devoured all the poetry and all the novels in which love raised itself to the height of a sentiment, to the pathos of passion, to the ideal of an ethereal worship. For whole months, Madam de Staël, Madam Cottin, Madam de Flahaut, Richardson, the Abbé Prevost, the German romances of Augustus Lafontaine, that prosaic Gessner of the middling classes, furnished delightful ready-made scenes for the internal drama of my youthful imagination. I inebriated myself with that

opium of the soul which peoples with fabulous phantoms the yet empty spaces of the imagination of the idle, of women and children. My existence was in those thousands of lives which passed, sparkled, and disappeared in succession before me as I turned the innumerable pages of those volumes which are more intoxicating than the leaves of the poppy.

My life was in my dreams. My loves personified themselves in those ideal beings which arose by turns in obedience to the magical evocations of the writer, and which flew through the air, leaving behind them the image of a woman, a smiling or mournful face, tresses of a raven or golden hue, glances of azure or ebony, and especially a melodious name. What a stupendous power is that creation by words which has doubled the world of beings, and which has given life to all the dreams of man! What a power it is especially when life itself is but a dream, and when man is nought yet but imagination!

But it was to the poets, above all others, that I was most passionately attached; those poets that we had very justly been forbidden to read during our manly studies, as dangerous enchanters, who awaken a dislike to reality by filling to the brim the cup of illusion which they raise to the lips of children.

The ones amongst those poets that I pored over in preference were not the Ancients, whose classic pages we had bedewed at too early an age with the sweat of our brows and our student's tears. Whenever I opened these, there arose from them an inexplicable odor of captivity, weariness, and constraint, which made me close them with the feelings of a liberated prisoner avoiding the sight of his chains: but it was those whose names are not inscribed in the catalogue of class-books that I preferred—the modern poets, Italian, English, German, French, whose flesh and blood are our own flesh and blood; who feel, think, love, and sing as we, the men of newer days, think, sing, and love:—Tasso, Dante, Petrarch, Shakspeare, Milton, Chateaubriand, who then sang like the rest; and especially Ossian, that poet of the waves, that mist of the imagination, that inarticulate moan of the northern oceans, that foam of the seashore, that lamentation of the shades, that seel of the clouds around the tempestuous peaks of Scotland, that northern Dante, who is as great, as majestic, as supernatural as the Dante of Florence, while he is more feeling, and who often draws from his phantoms cries that are more human and more heart-rending than those of Homer's heroes.

NOTE VI.

That was the time when Ossian, the poet of the genius of ruin and strife, swayed the imagination of France. Baour-Lormain translated him in sonorous verse for the camps of the Emperor. The women sang him in plaintive ballads, or in triumphal flourishes, at the departure, on the graves, or at the return of their lovers. Small editions of him in portable volumes found their way into every library. One of these fell into my hands. I buried myself in that ocean of shadows, blood, tears, spectres, foam, snow, mist, frost, and imagery, the immensity, gloom, and mournfulness of which harmonized so well with the melancholy grandeur of a soul of sixteen casting its first rays on the infinite. Ossian's sites and pictures also corresponded marvellously well with the nature of the country of almost Scottish mountains, with the season of the year and the gloom of the sites in which I read him. It was during the biting chills of November and December. The earth was covered with a sheet of snow, out of which shot at unequal distances the black trunks of pines, or above which extended the naked branches of oaks whereon assembled and croaked whole flocks of crows. The icy fogs hung the bushes with glistening rime. The clouds undulated on the snow-crowned brows of the mountains. Rare glimpses of sunshine pierced them from time to time, and gave to view deep perspectives of endless valleys, where the eye might fancy it saw the gulfs of the sea. This was the natural and sublime scenery of the poems of Ossian which I held in my hand. I would carry them with me in my game-bag to the mountains, and, while the dogs made the defiles ring with their voices, I would read them, seated beneath some concave rock; and only raise my eyes from the page to find, in the horizon and at my feet, the same mists, the same dense clouds, the same plains of ice and snow that the eyes of my imagination had just seen in my book. How often have I felt my tears freeze and hang like icicles from my eyelashes. I had become one of the bard's sons; one of the heroical, enamored, plaintive shadows, which fight, love, weep, or sing to the sound of the harp in the dark domains of Fingal. Ossian is certainly one of the pallets on which my imagination has blended the most colors, and which has left the most of its tints on the feeble sketches which I have since traced. Many learned antiquaries have

pretended and still pretend that he never existed or wrote, that his poems are a fraud of Macpherson's. I would as soon say that Salvator Rosa had invented nature.

NOTE VII.

But there was something lacking to make my comprehension of Ossian complete,—the shadow of a love. How could I adore without an object? complain without suffering? weep without tears? My imagination—the imagination of a childish dreamer—needed a pretext. Chance and the neighborhood were not tardy in furnishing me with that necessary type of my adorations and my songs. I would have made one for myself out of my dreams, my clouds and my snows, if the other had not been near at hand. But the other *was* near at hand, and was worthy of a worship less imaginary and less puerile than mine.

My father, at this period, spent the whole of his winters in the country. In the neighborhood there were several noble families, and families of respectable and refined people who did not belong to the nobility, that also remained in their castles, or on their small estates, all the year round. They used to assemble at country repasts, or at evening parties which were free from ostentatious display. The utmost staid simplicity and the most cordial equality reigned at these meetings of neighbors and friends. Old lords who had been ruined by the Revolution, absentees who had returned from exile, still young and given to story-telling; curates, notaries, village doctors, families living in the retirement of their rustic dwellings, rich husbandmen whom habit and neighborhood had mingled with the landholders and nobility;—such were the ingredients that composed those meetings, whose frequency had been increased by the approach of winter.

While the parents held long conversations around the table, or played chess, backgammon, or cards in the parlor, the young people amused themselves with less serious games in a corner of the room, or scattered themselves through the gardens, to pack the snow and drive the robin-redbreasts or tomtits from their nests amid the rose-bushes; or rehearsed the parts of little plays, and acted proverbs, which they came

and performed before their parents and friends after supper, and after chess and the other games had been finished.

A young girl of my own age, sixteen, the only daughter of a landholder in our mountains who was in easy circumstances, distinguished herself amongst all those children by her wit, her learning, and her precocious talents. Her beauty, which was more mature, and which was beginning to make her more pensive and more reserved than her companions, also distinguished her from them. Her features, although they were not perfectly regular, had that contagious languishing expression which makes the eyes and thoughts of those who contemplate it also languid and pensive. Blue eyes, black and luxuriant hair, a mouth which seldom laughed and which only opened to give vent to words that were brief, serious, and full of a sense that was superior to her years; a form in which all the graceful inflections of youth already revealed themselves; an indolent gait, a glance which was often fixed in contemplation, and which, when surprised, was always averted, as if to hide the reveries with which it was filled;—such was the young girl. She seemed to have a foreboding that her life was to be as short and as nebulous as the fine winter days in which I knew her. She has been slumbering for a long time beneath that snow which bore the prints of our first footsteps. Her name was Lucy.

NOTE VIII.

She had returned, a few months before, from a convent in Paris, where her parents had given her an education every way superior to her destiny and her situation in life. She was a musician. She had a voice which made every listener weep. She danced with a perfection of attitude and motion which was somewhat supine, but which gave art the freedom, ease, and grace of a child's movements. She spoke two foreign languages. She had brought back with her from Paris numerous books with which she continued to feed her mind in the solitude of her father's hamlet. She knew the poets by heart; like myself, she adored Ossian, whose pictures reminded her of our own hills in those of Morven. This common love for the same poet, this knowledge possessed by both of a language unknown to others, alone formed a sort of involun-

tary intimacy and secret communion between us. We constantly sought one another out, we drew nearer to one another everywhere, to converse about him. Long before we knew that we had an inclination for one another, we had already met in our clouds, we had loved each other in our favorite poet. Often separated from the rest of the company, in our sports, in our rambles, we would almost always walk a long way in advance of her mother and my sisters, uttering but few words, hardly daring to look at one another, but from time to time directing each other's attention to some beautiful rainbow in the mists, some dark glen deluged with a sheet of haze out of which arose the spire of some church, or the cluster of crumbling towers of some old castle, looking like the peak of a rock rising out of the sea, or the masts of a submerged vessel; or, again, pointing out to one another some frozen cascade in the depths of a ravine, over which the chestnut-trees and oaks hung their arms laden with snow, like the old men of Lochlin over the harp of the waters.

We would answer one another with a glance of speechless admiration and inward concord. When I escorted her to the house at the other end of the valley where lived her father, we would often walk thus, side by side, for half an hour, without making any noise other than the slight crackling sound produced by our footfalls along the snow-covered path. And yet we never parted without a sigh in our hearts and a blush upon our brows.

Our families and the neighbors smiled at this childish partiality, which they had discovered long before those who were most interested in it. They considered it natural and free from danger for two children of our age, who did not even know the name of the feeling that thus drew them together, and who, far from confessing that predilection to each other, did not even attempt to explain it to themselves.

NOTE IX.

Meanwhile, this feeling from day to day became more intense in both our bosoms. When I had spent the evening by her side, and had escorted her family as far as the torrent above which stood her father's house on a rocky promontory, I felt as if my heart had been torn from my bosom

and confined along with her within those thick walls and behind that resounding door. I would return at a slow pace, without following any beaten track, through the copses and the meadows, turning my head at each moment to gaze at the black shadow cast upon the firmament by the dark walls; happy when I caught a glimpse of a small light through the window of the high tower which overlooked the torrent, and in which I knew she went to read before retiring to rest.

Every day, under some pretext or other, I would stroll in the direction of the valley, with my gun on my arm and my dog at my heels. I would spend whole hours in prowling within sight of the old mansion-house, without hearing any thing but the voices of the watch-dogs, that were howling with delight as they played with their young mistress; without seeing any thing but the smoke that lazily rose from the chimneys and curled up towards the gray sky. Sometimes, however, I would catch a glimpse of the maiden herself, robed in a white dress loosely tied around her neck; she would open her window to admit the morning sunbeam, or the mid-day breeze; she would place a flower-pot on the ledge, to allow the housed plant to breathe the air of heaven; or else she would hang upon the nail outside, the cage of her goldfinch that kissed her lips between the wires.

Sometimes she would also lean out for a long while to watch the foaming torrent and the fleeting clouds, and allow her beautiful black ringlets to be dashed against the wall by the winter blast. She little suspected that from the opposite side of the ravine a friendly glance followed all her movements; that half-open lips sought to discover in the air the waves of wind which had kissed her tresses, to bear their perfume to the meadows. In the evening, I would timidly tell her, that during the day I had passed in sight of her house; that she had watered her plants at such an hour; that she had exposed her bird to the sun at such another hour; that she had afterwards leaned pensively out of the window a moment; that she had subsequently sung or played on the piano; and that, after all that, she had closed the sash, and seated herself, and remained a long time motionless, like a person reading.

NOTE X.

She blushed when she saw that I was such an attentive observer of her actions, and when she reflected that an invisible gaze noted her glances, her steps, and her gestures, even in her tower, where she thought she was only seen by God; but she did not seem to attach any signification of particular attachment to that watchfulness of my mind over her.

"And you," would she say to me, with an interest that was perceptible in her voice, although hid under assumed indifference, "what have you done to-day?"

I never dared to reply to her: "I have thought of you!"

And we continued to remain in that delightful indecision of two beings who feel in their hearts that they adore one another, but who would never dare to say so with their lips, even if their very silence and tremor did not spare their lips that trouble.

Ossian was our mute confidant and interpreter. She had lent me a volume of his works. I was to return it to her. After having placed between its leaves the bits of moss, the berries of the ivy, the blue flowers which she loved to gather in the hedges or cull from the pots of cheiranthus in the cottages, when we rambled together in the fall of the year; after having thus sought to make her think of me, and shown that I thought of her tastes myself, I conceived the idea of adding one or two pages to Ossian, and of intrusting the shades of the Scottish bards with the secret of my hopeless love. I allowed myself to be asked repeatedly for the book, ere I returned it, and twenty times mentioned the number of a page, "which I reperused constantly," said I to her, "which expressed my whole soul, which was saturated with all my tears of admiration, and which I entreated her also to read, but to read alone, in her chamber, with all her thoughts collected, lulled by the sound of the wind in the pines, and the torrent in its bed, as Ossian no doubt had written it." In this manner I stimulated her curiosity, and hoped that she would open the volume at the page which contained the poem of her own sighs.

NOTE XI.

Three years ago, I again found these first verses amongst the papers of the poor curate of B***, who at that period mingled in the company of our childhood, and for whom I had copied them. For what love is there that has no need of a confidant? Here they are, in all their inexperience, in all their weakness. I entreat M. de Lormain,—who, like Ossian, is a poet, and blind now,—to pardon them. They were the distant echo of Scotia repeated by the voice of a child in the mountains of his native land—a pallet, but no outlines; clouds, but no colors. At a later day, a ray of the poetry of the South soon dispelled for me all that fantastic haze of the North.

TO LUCY L.....*

RECITATIVO.

The harp of Morven of my soul is the emblem; from Cromla it hears the approach of the footsteps of the dead; beside my pillow its string sounds of its own accord when the shadow of the future sweeps over its fibres. Shadows of the future, arise for my soul! Dispel the vapor which hides you from my eyes . . . . What star descends? . . . . What phantom of a woman rests its noiseless feet on the crystal of the skies? * * * * * *
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Is it a dying dream? . . . A soul coming into life? Mingled with the golden mists in the impalpable ether, it resembles the threads of the white tissue of rime which is made to float on winter's panes by dreams. Blow not on it, O warm breath of the waves! Melt not that shadow, fires of the firmament! Birds, efface not beneath your feet those vague features in which the maiden appears to her lover's dreams.

The lamp of the fisherman floating through the fog has

* This Poem is so completely Ossianic in its style that I have followed the example of the talented translator of Scotland's gifted bard, and rendered it, almost literally, in prose. As some of its readers, however, with more capacity for the task than myself, may wish to versify it, they will *find the original* at the end of the work.—Tr.

rays less soft than her distant gaze. The fire that the shepherd lights amid the furze melts less imperceptibly in the fires of morn. * * * * * *
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Beneath her childlike robe, which from her shoulder slips, are hardly to be seen two throbbing globes, like the knots formed beneath the willow's coat, which with spring's juices make the trunk to swell.

SONG.

It is night upon the hills. The shaken avalanche slides at intervals down the valley's sides. Its dust scatters over the hidden path; the noise it makes arrests in mid-air the iron hoof of the deer. Listening with attentive ear for the dog that pursues him in dreams, he awaits the rising of the crescent to flee away. The black and uprooted tree on the edge of the ravine leans like a mast bowed by the waves. The crow that slumbers on a leafless branch, awakes, and sends forth a cry which is lost in the clouds; in her flight she showers in white flakes the snow which loaded her wings upon her sides. The clouds, driven by the damp breezes, pile themselves in dark pyramids upon the mountain-tops; or, like vessels on the foaming gulf, make furrows in the blue of heaven. The shivering wind of Erin, which sweeps the plain, arrests the breath upon the lip, and stiffens it in icicles; and the lake on which languishes the o'erturned boat, is nought but a field of rime harrowed by the tempest. * * *
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A roof, by the thatch whitened, where the lighted turf makes a pale smoke crawl upon the sky; the voice of the howling dog, in mournful barking rises, the only vestige of life in the bosom of all that death! * * *
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In the midst of all this night, who is that young man, or that dream, that follows with rapid stride the shore of the frozen pool, climbs the sharp hill, with a weapon in his hand, meets the roebuck without turning from his course, descends

again from the heights into the deep defile, where the tower of the old chiefs totters on the torrent's brink? His black hound searches through the woods and howls, and the frozen blast is laden with one voice.

SONG OF THE HUNTER.

Arise! arise! o'er the dark hills, hind with the silver horns, who art hunted by the shades! O moon! on these walls shed thy white beams! These walls are the palace of my brain's dreams! With the vaporish rays of thy chaste light make each stone sparkle in my fascinated eyes; pour upon the slate, and reverberate in torrents of languor, O my moon, even in my heart! In the crevices of the battlements the cheiranthus is dead. On the door, the ivy shivers in the northern blast, like the snow-covered cloak from which the shepherd, on his return, shakes the flakes in the court-yard ere he enters. The massive wall yawns at the thick casement. . . . . . Moon! with thy ray, my glance enters! There I see, by the light of the hearth so wide and high, an ash-tree blazing with red glare in the fireplace.

THE HUNTER.

Peering queen of night, what seest thou in the hall?

THE MOON.

The dogs of the bold huntsman sleeping on the flag.

THE HUNTER.

What care I for the dogs, the roebuck, and the horn? Peering queen of night, look, and speak again.

THE MOON.

In the shade of a pillar, the nurse spinning the fleece of sheep on the rapid-moving wheel. Her eyelids by slumber are half closed. At length upon her shoulder leans her head in sleep; forgetful of the down with which the distaff is full, in the ashes at her feet slips and rolls the wool.

THE HUNTER.

What care I for the nurse with time-burdened fingers? Brilliant queen of night, continue to look and speak!

THE MOON.

Between the hearth and the wall, the maiden fair, in her

lap leaving hei linen and her needle, with her elbow on the table. . . . .

THE HUNTER.

Peering queen of night, fix thy gaze on her! and look and continue!

THE MOON.

Pensively leaning on the oaken table, she watches the fleeting forms of the shade and glimmer, which float upon the wall, like gnats upon an azure brook. Her eyes look as though they were fixed on mysteries, seeking a hidden sense in those meaningless characters; and she, as though she saw in advance the vague features of her future love's shadow entering that tower. No, never has lover by me from his couch torn, in his sleep-laden arms folded a more beautiful dream! Dost thou see her ebon tresses, jealous of her charms, rolling like night down to her very knees?

THE HUNTER.

"Blow, breezes of heaven! open that dark veil!—Clouds of her brow, give me back my star!—let me but catch a glimpse beneath that jet, of the white of her arm protruding from the raven net! Or of the undulation of her slender form, or of that rounded elbow on which her thoughts now rest, or of the lily of her cheek, or of the azure of her glance, whose sole remembrance transfixes like a lance. O daughter of the rock! thou knowest not what dreams thou evokest with the dark globe of thine eyes! . . . From each of the long lashes which veil their languor my heart is suspended, like the bee from the trefoil. Remain, oh! remain long on thy slumber-burdened arm to gratify the love of the huntsman who now watches thee! I neither feel the night nor the biting frost. Thy breath is my hearth, thine eyes my climate are. Of the shadows of my bosom, the thought of thee is the flame! All snows are spring in the sunbeams of thy soul! Oh sleep! Oh! dream thus, with thy head upon thine arm! And when at dawn, to-morrow, thou awakest, may my long glances, incrusted in the stone, adhere to the wall and tell thine eyelid that a phantom has watched o'er thee in thy slumber! And mayst thou then seek his name!" * * *

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RECITATIVO.

At the foot of the lonely tower, thus sang the bard with the brown locks, in the starlight night. And his dogs, benumbed by the cold, left him all alone, and the falling rime covered him with a winding-sheet, and the wind which froze the blood in his veins was wrapping him by degrees in the slumber of his forefathers, and the wolves prowling on the pathless winter, howled with joy to the dead, as they scented their morrow's prey. And while he was dying on the brink of the precipice, the maiden, awake, listened to the nurse relating in smothered tones matters of bygone days; or drew an accord from the harp beneath her fingers; or, beating the brand with fiery eyes, read her fate in the flight of the sparks; or, by the light of the flaming walnut-limb, gazed with absent eye at the chimney's glare reflected on the wall.

MILLY, 16th Sept., 1805.

NOTE XII.

One evening, as we were about to separate, I returned her the volume swelled by these lines. She read them without anger, and to all appearance without surprise. She answered them in a little poem also written in the Ossianic style, like my own, which was inserted between the pages of another volume. Her verses only expressed the melancholy lament of a young maiden of Morven, who sees her brother's vessel set sail for a distant land, and who mourns the lost companion of her childhood, on the brink of the native torrent. I thought this piece of poetry admirable, and far superior to mine. It was in fact more correct and more graceful. In it there were some of those notes which are unknown to rhetoric and which are only to be found in woman's heart. Our poetical correspondence continued in this manner several days, and increased, by this confidential interchange of our thoughts, the intimacy which already existed between our eyes.

NOTE XIII.

We always found the hours too short that we spent together, during the walks or during the family meetings in the evening, in contemplating the wild features of our mountains, the pine-trees loaded with snow—imitating spectres that trail their winding-sheets,—the moon in the clouds, the foam of the waterfall whence arose the *heaven's bow in showers* spoken of by Ossian. We aspired to the enjoyment of those nocturnal spectacles during nights that would more completely be our own, and in interchanging more freely than we dared to do before indifferent listeners, the young, fresh, and inexhaustible emanations of our souls before the marvels of that nature which harmonized with the marvels of our first ecstasies and our first wonderments.

"How delicious," would we often say to one another, "would be the hours passed together amid the silence and solitude of the night, in eternally revealing to one another without witnesses the most secret emotions of our souls, like *Fingal, Morni,* and *Malvina* on the hills of their forefathers!"

Tears of longing and enthusiasm would dim our eyes at these anticipated pictures of the poetical happiness which we dared to hope for in those interviews hidden from the light of day and the eyes of our parents. By dint of speaking of this childish dream, we created an equal desire in each other's bosom to realize it; then we secretly, but innocently, discussed the means of procuring this imaginary felicity. Nothing was easier from the moment that we understood one another—I solicited with passionate earnestness; she acquiesced without suspicion, without resistance.

NOTE XIV.

The tower which Lucy inhabited, at the extremity of her father's small manor, rested on a terrace whose wall, built in the shape of a rampart, had its foundation in the bottom of the vale near the torrent. The wall shot up with a slope that was quite gentle. Clumps of box, brambles, and moss, which had grown in the crevices of the old time-worn stones, permitted a bold and agile man to climb to the top of the parapet,

and jump thence into the little garden which occupied the narrow space of the terrace at the foot of the tower. A low door at the bottom of a circular flight of steps within the tower, opened upon the garden. This door, which was secured inside by a single bolt, could be opened by Lucy's hand and give her freedom to walk in the garden while her nurse slept. I was familiar with the wall, the terrace, the garden, the tower, the stairs. It was only necessary for her to have enough resolution to come down, for me to have sufficient audacity to ascend. We agreed upon the night, the hour, the signal which I was to make from the opposite hill, by flashing the priming of my gun.

That which was most embarrassing for me, was to leave my father's house unperceived at night. The massive front door could only be opened with a loud clatter—made by enormous rusty locks, bolts, and bars—which could not fail to awaken my father. I slept in one of the upper chambers. I could descend into the garden by swinging myself from the end of one of the bed-sheets; but I could not get up again. A ladder which had fortunately been forgotten by the masons who had been working for several days in the vine-presses, helped me out of my difficulty. I reared it in the evening, against the wall of my chamber. I impatiently waited until the clock had tolled the eleventh hour, and until every sound was hushed in the house. I noiselessly opened the casement, and, with my gun in my hand, descended into the hazel-tree walk. But I had taken but a few soundless steps along the snow-covered path, when the ladder, slipping down the wall with a crash, fell upon the ground. A large hunting-dog that slept at the foot of my bed, seeing me go out of the window, had attempted to follow me. His paws had got entangled in the upper rundles of the ladder, and the weight of his body had dragged it to the ground. The moment he freed himself he sprang towards me and covered me with caresses. I rebuffed him harshly, for the first time in my life. I made a feint to beat him in order to deter him from following me further. He crouched submissively, and, without budging, saw me leap over the wall which separated the garden from the vineyard.

NOTE XV.

I glided across the fields, the woods, and the meadows, and reached the ravine opposite Lucy's house, without encountering any one. I flashed the priming. A small light, ignited for a moment at the high window of the tower and immediately afterwards extinguished, answered my signal. I rested my gun against the sloping wall. I climbed the rampart. I jumped upon the terrace. At the same moment the door of the tower turned upon its hinges. Lucy, descending the last step, and walking as if she wished to deaden the sound of her footfalls, advanced towards the walk in which I was waiting for her, somewhat hid in the shade. A brilliant moon illuminated with its cold, but dazzling rays, the rest of the terrace, the walls and windows of the tower, and the sides of the glen.

Our dreams were at length realized. Our hearts throbbed. We neither dared to look at one another, nor speak. Meanwhile, however, I brushed away with my hand the icy snow which covered a stone bench. I spread my cloak over it, and we both seated ourselves at some distance apart. Neither of us dared break the silence which reigned around us. We turned our gaze towards our feet, then towards the tower, and next up to heaven. At last I summoned courage:

"O, Lucy," said I to her, "how picturesquely the moon's light is reflected by all the icicles of the torrent, by all the snows in the valley! What happiness it is to gaze upon it with you!"

"Yes," returned she, "every thing seems more beautiful by the side of a friend who shares your admiration for these landscapes."

She was about to pursue, when a large black mass, shooting like a cannon-ball over the parapet wall, rolled into the walk, and in two or three leaps, bounded upon us, barking with joy.

It was my dog, who had followed me at a distance, and who, upon finding that I did not return as soon as he expected, had tracked my footsteps, and climbed the wall of the terrace as I had done. The sound of his voice, and the noise which he made in leaping through the garden, were answered by the prolonged barking of the dogs in the court-yard; and we perceived in the interior of the house the glimmer of a lamp which passed from window to window, approaching the tower. We

sprang from our seats. Lucy rushed towards the door of her tower, the bolt of which I heard her push precipitately. I let myself slide down to the foot of the wall. My dog followed me. I advanced with rapid strides along the defiles of the mountains, cursing the importunate fidelity of the poor animal. I arrived beneath the window of my bed-chamber, shivering with cold.

I replaced the ladder. I got into bed at the break of day, with no other mementoes of that first night of Ossianic poetry except wet feet, benumbed limbs, a conscience somewhat humiliated, because of my timidity in the presence of charming Lucy, and a very slight feeling of anger towards my dog, who had opportunely interrupted an interview which was already beginning to add much more to our embarrassment than to our happiness.

NOTE XVI.

Thus terminated these imaginary loves, which were beginning to make our parents somewhat anxious. My nocturnal sally from the house had been discovered. Haste was made to send me from home before this childishness became more serious. We swore to love one another by all the stars of the night, by all the waves of the torrent, by all the trees of the valley. These vows melted with the snows of winter. I set out to complete my education at Paris, and in other great cities. During my absence, Lucy was married; became an exemplary wife, made the happiness of a husband she loved, and died at an early age, in a situation which was as prosaic as her first dreams had been poetical. At times I again see her melancholy and diaphanous shade on the little terrace of the tower of * * * * * when I pass through the glen in winter-time, when the wind whips my horse's mane, or when the dogs bark in the yard of the deserted manor-house.

NOTE XVII.

I have written nothing about the three years of my life spent away from the paternal roof, in the midst of all the im-

prudences, all the dissipation, all the irregularities of a youth of inactivity—years which only leave behind them humiliation and regret for maturer age; and the remembrance of which we would like to turn away as a cup of bitterness from our lips—years which we would like to forget.

Perhaps will I note them down some day or other, as people erect a cross on the spot where a traveller has fallen, to warn those who may pass that way after him.

BOOK VII.

NOTE I.

GRAZIELLA.

At eighteen years of age, my family intrusted me to the care of one of my relatives, who was summoned to Tuscany on matters of business, whither she was going in company with her husband. This was an opportunity to make me travel, and tear me from that dangerous idleness of the paternal roof and of country towns, where the first passions of the soul become corrupt through want of activity. I started with the enthusiasm of a child who is about to see the curtain rise on the most splendid scenes of nature and life.

The Alps, the brilliancy of whose eternal snows on the horizon's edge, I had gazed at since my childhood from the summit of the hill of Milly; the sea, so many glowing pictures of which travellers and poets had thrown upon my mind; Italia's sky, whose warmth and serenity, so to speak, I had already breathed in Gœthe's verses, in Corinna's lines:

"Knowest thou the land where the myrtles bloom!"

The monuments, yet standing, of that Roman antiquity with which my yet recent studies had filled my brain; in a word, liberty; distance, which lends a charm to every thing that is far away; adventures, those certain accidents of long voyages, which youthful imaginations foresee, arrange, and enjoy in ad-

vance: the change of language, faces, manners, which seems to initiate the mind into a new world; all this fascinated my fancy. I lived in a state of constant intoxication during the long days of expectation which preceded our departure. This delirium, renewed each day by the beauties of nature in Savoy, in Switzerland, on the lake of Geneva, on the glaciers of the Simplon, near Como's lake, at Milan, and in Florence, only abated at my return, two years afterwards.

As the affairs which took my travelling companion to Leghorn were prolonged indefinitely, a proposition was made to take me back to France, ere I had seen Rome and Naples. This was snatching my dream from me at the moment that I was about to grasp it. I inwardly rebelled against such an idea. I wrote to my father to ask his permission to continue my travels in Italy alone; and, without awaiting his answer, which I hardly hoped would be favorable, I resolved to forestall disobedience by action.

"If the prohibition arrives," said I to myself, "it will arrive too late. I will be reprimanded, but I will be forgiven. I will return, but I will have seen."

I reviewed the state of my slender purse; but I calculated that there was one of my mother's relatives settled at Naples, and that he would not refuse me some money to take me back home. I started, one fine night, from Leghorn in the post-coach for Rome.

I spent the winter alone in a small room, in a dark street which terminates at the *Piazza di Spagna*, with a Roman painter who received me as a boarder in his family. My face, my youth, my enthusiasm, my loneliness in the midst of an unknown country, had interested one of my travelling companions on the road from Florence to Rome. He formed a sudden friendship with me. He was a handsome young man about my own age. It appeared that he was either the son or the nephew of the famous singer *David*, who was then the first-tenor of the Italian theatres. David was also travelling with us. He was a man already advanced in years. He was going to sing for the last time at the theatre of *San Carlo* in Naples.

David's treatment towards me was that of a father, and his young companion overloaded me with attentions and kindnesses. I responded to their advances with the freedom and simplicity of my age. We had not yet reached Rome when the handsome traveller and I were already inseparable. In those

days it took the post-coach not less than three days to go from Florence to Rome. In the hostelries, my new friend was my interpreter; at table, he served me the first; in the coach, he reserved the best seat next to himself for me, and, if I fell asleep, I was sure that my head would find his shoulder for a pillow.

When I left the coach during the long ascents of the hills of Tuscany or the Sabine, he would also leave it and describe the country to me, name the towns, point out the monuments; he would even cull beautiful flowers, and purchase fine figs and grapes on the roadside, and with them fill my hands and my hat. David seemed to look with pleasure on the affection of his travelling companion for the young stranger. Sometimes, while gazing at me, they would smile with an expression of mutual understanding and malice, mingled with benignity.

As we entered Rome at night, I quite naturally stopped at the same inn as they. I was conducted to my bed-chamber; I did not awake until aroused by the voice of my young friend, who was knocking at my door and inviting me down to breakfast. I dressed myself with all speed and hastened to the apartment where all the travellers were assembled. I wished to press the hand of my travelling companion; and with my eyes I was making a vain search for him amongst the guests, when a general burst of laughter rang through the hall. Instead of the son or nephew of David, I perceived alongside of him the charming features of a young Roman girl, who was elegantly dressed and whose raven hair, twisted in bands around her brow, was fastened behind by two long golden pins with heads of pearl, like those which are yet worn by the peasants of Tivoli. This was my friend who, on arriving in Rome, had resumed her own garments and her sex.

I should have suspected this from the tenderness of her glance and the grace of her smile. But no such doubt had entered my mind.

"The dress changes not the heart," said the beautiful Roman to me, blushing the while. "You shall not sleep on my shoulder again, however, and instead of receiving flowers from me, it is you who shall give them to me. This adventure will teach you not to rely on the appearances of friendship that may hereafter be shown to you; they may probably be feelings of a different nature."

The young girl was a singer, and David's favorite pupil.

The old man took her with him wherever he went, and always clothed in the garb of a man to avoid remarks on the road. He treated her more like a father than a protector, and was no way jealous of the gentle and innocent familiarity which he himself had allowed to spring up between us.

NOTE II.

David and his pupil spent several weeks in Rome. The day following our arrival, she again donned her male attire and conducted me first to Saint-Peter's, then to the Coliseum, to Frascati, Tivoli, Albano; I thus escaped the fatiguing repetitions of those salaried demonstrators who dissect the corpse of Rome for travellers, and who, by casting their monotonous litany of proper names and dates over the impressions of your mind, invade the brain and rout the appreciation of all that is admirable. The Camilla was not learned; but she was born in Rome, and instinctively knew the beauteous sites and grand views which had made impressions on her in her childhood.

She led me without any forethought to the best places and at the best hours, to contemplate the remains of the ancient city. In the morning, beneath the firs with wide-spreading domes, on *Monte-Pincio;* in the evening, under the far-reaching shades of the colonnade of Saint-Peter's; by moonlight, within the silent walls of the Coliseum; during bright autumn days, to Albano, Frascati, to the temple of the Sibyl, reeking with the mists of the cascades of Tivoli. She was as gay and as frolicsome as a statue of eternal Youth in the midst of those vestiges of Time and Death. She danced o'er the grave of *Cecilia Metella;* and while I sat upon a stone, buried in thought, she made the sinister arches of Diocletian's palace ring with the peals of her theatrical voice.

In the evening, we would return to town, with our carriage filled with flowers and the remains of statues, and meet old David whose business detained him in Rome, and who would take us to end the day in his box at the theatre. The *cantatrice,* who was a few years my elder, evinced no feelings towards me other than those of a slightly tender friendship. I was too timid to show any others myself; I did not even experience any, notwithstanding my youth and her beauty. Her male attire, her wholly masculine familiarity, the manly tone

of her tenor voice, and the freedom of her manners, made such an impression on me that I only looked upon her as a handsome young man, a companion and a friend.

NOTE III.

When Camilla had taken her departure, I remained completely alone in Rome, without any letters of recommendation, without any other acquaintances than the sites, the monuments, and the streets to which Camilla had introduced me. The aged painter in whose house I lodged, only left his studio on Sundays to go to mass with his wife and daughter, a young girl of sixteen, who was as laborious as her father. Their dwelling was a sort of monastery, where the artist's labors were only interrupted by a frugal repast and by prayer.

At eve, when the sun's last beams faded on the windowpanes of the poor painter's elevated room, and when the bells of the monasteries tolled the *Ave Maria*, that harmonious farewell to day in Italy, the sole relaxation of the family was to tell their beads together and to chant the litanies until their voices, overpowered by sleep, sunk into a vague and monotonous murmur, like that of the waves on a shore where the wind dies away with approaching night.

I loved that calm and pious evening scene, which ended a day of labor with the hands by that hymn of three souls, elevating themselves to heaven to repose after their toil. It brought back to me the remembrance of the home where my mother also used to assemble us, at eve, for prayer, now in her own room, anon in the gravel walk of the little garden of Milly, lighted by the last gleams of declining day. In again finding the same customs, the same acts, the same religion, I almost felt at home in that unknown family. I have never seen a more retired, solitary, laborious, and sanctified life than that which was led in the dwelling of the Roman painter.

The painter had a brother. This brother did not live with him. He taught the Italian language to those strangers of distinction who spent the winters in Rome. He was more than a mere professor of languages; he was a Roman scholar of the highest merit. Still young, with a beautiful face, of an antique character, he had figured with brilliancy in the

revolutionary attempts which the Roman republicans had made to resuscitate liberty in their country. He was one of the tribunes of the people, one of the *Rienzis* of that period. In that short resurrection of ancient Rome, brought about by the French and smothered by Mack and the Neapolitans, he had played a principal part; he had harangued the people at the Capitol, raised the flag of independence, and held one of the first offices of the Republic. Hunted, persecuted, imprisoned at the moment of the reaction, he had owed his safety to the arrival of the French, who had saved the republicans, but ruined the Republic.

This Roman adored revolutionary and philosophical France; he abhorred the Emperor and the Empire. Like all Italian liberals, he looked upon Bonaparte as the Cæsar of freedom. Young as I was, I shared the same sentiments. This conformity of hatred and of mute conspiracy against Bonaparte soon revealed itself. When he saw with what juvenile, and, at the same time, antique enthusiasm I vibrated to the accents of liberty when we read together the incendiary lines of the poet Monti, or the republican scenes of Alfieri, he saw that he could trust me with his confidence, and I became less his pupil than his friend.

NOTE IV.

The proof that liberty is the divine ideal of man, is that she is the first dream of youth, and that she does not fade from our soul until our heart is withered and our mind either debased or discouraged. There is not a soul twenty years old that is not republican. There is not a decayed heart that is not servile.

How often have my teacher and I gone and seated ourselves on the hill of the villa Pamphili, whence you can see Rome, its domes, its ruins, its Tiber, which crawls in foulness, silence, and shame, beneath the arches of the *Ponte Rotto;* whence you can hear the plaintive murmur of its fountains and the almost noiseless footsteps of its populace walking in silence through its deserted streets! How often have we shed bitter tears over the fate of this world, abandoned to tyranny of every kind; where philosophy and liberty had for a moment seemed to revive in France and Italy only to be defiled, be-

trayed, and oppressed everywhere! How many murmured imprecations have arisen from our breasts against that tyrant of the human mind; against that crowned soldier who had only dabbled in the Revolution to draw from it the strength to destroy it and subject nations anew to every prejudice and every servitude! From this period dated my love for the emancipation of the human mind and that intellectual hatred of the hero of the age; a hatred which was based on reason, and felt at the same time; a hatred which reflection and time have only justified, despite the vile flatterers of his memory; a hatred with which I am proud to have lived, and with which I hope to die!

NOTE V.

It was under the influence of these feelings that I studied Rome, her history, and her monuments. I sallied forth in the morning alone, before the bustle of the town could divert the thoughts of the contemplator. I carried under my arm the historians, the poets, the describers of Rome. I went to sit or wander amid the deserted ruins of the Forum, the Coliseum, of the Roman *Campagna*. I gazed, I read, I meditated, by turns. I made Rome a serious study. It was my best course of history. Antiquity, instead of being an *ennui*, became an affection for me. In this study I followed no plan other than my inclination. I went from ancient Rome to modern Rome, from the Pantheon to the Palace of Leo X., from the house of Horace, at Tibur, to the dwelling of Rafael. Poets, painters, historians, great men, all passed confusedly before me; I would only stop those who interested me most at the time.

Towards eleven o'clock, I re-entered my little cell in the painter's house, to breakfast. I ate a slice of bread and a piece of cheese on my work-table, reading the while. I drank a cup of milk. Then I worked, made notes, and wrote until dinner-time. The wife and daughter of my host always prepared that meal for us with their own hands. After dinner, I wandered forth again, and only returned at nightfall. A few hours' conversation with the artist's family, and readings, prolonged far into the night, completed those peaceful days. I felt no need of society. I even enjoyed my loneliness. Rome

and my soul, satisfied me. I thus spent one whole long winter, from the month of October until the month of April following, without knowing one day of lassitude or weariness. It was the remembrance of these impressions which made me write those lines on Tibur, ten years afterwards.*

NOTE VI.

Now, when I make a close search in my mind for all my impressions of Rome, I only find two, which efface, or, at least, predominate over all others: the Coliseum, that work of the Roman people; Saint-Peter's, that master-piece of Catholicism. The Coliseum is the gigantic trace left by a superhuman people, who, for their pride and their ferocious pleasures, reared monuments large enough to contain a whole nation. A monument, whose size and duration make it the rival even of the works of nature. The Tiber will have dried up between its banks of mud when the Coliseum will still overlook its bed.

Saint-Peter's is the work of a great thought, of a religion, of the whole of humanity at one period of the world! It is no edifice destined to contain a base nation. It is a temple destined to contain all the philosophy, all the prayers, all the greatness, all the thoughts of man. The walls seem to rise and extend, not in proportion to a people, but in proportion to God. Michael Angelo alone understood Catholicism, and in Saint-Peter's he has given it its most sublime and most complete expression. Saint-Peter's is really the marble apotheosis, the monumental transfiguration of the religion of Christ.

The architects of the Gothic cathedrals were sublime barbarians. Michael Angelo alone was a philosopher in his conceptions. Saint-Peter's is philosophical Christianity, from which the divine architect drives superstition and darkness, and into which he brings space, beauty, symmetry, inexhaustible streams of light. The incomparable beauty of St. Peter's, at Rome, consists in its being a temple which might serve for all forms of worship—a deistical temple, if I may use that word and apply it to a mass of stones. It seems designed solely for the purpose of clothing the thought of God, in all its splendor.

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* *Vide* the *Meditations.*

Were Christianity to perish, Saint-Peter's would still remain the universal, eternal, national temple, of whatsoever religion might succeed the worship of Christ, provided that that religion were worthy of humanity and of God! It is the most *abstract* temple that human genius, inspired by a divine thought, has ever constructed here below. When you enter it, you know not whether you are entering an ancient or a modern temple; no detail offends the eye, no symbol diverts the mind; men of all religions enter there with the same respect. You feel that it is a temple in which the thought of God alone can dwell, and which no other thought could fill.

Change the priest, take away the altar, remove the paintings, pull down the statues, and nothing is changed; it is always the house of God! or, rather, Saint-Peter's in itself alone, is an immense symbol of that eternal Christianity which, possessing in its morality and in its holiness the germs of all the successive developments of religious thought of all ages and all men, opens itself to reason in proportion as God makes reason shine, communicates with God in the light, grows and rises with the constantly increasing proportions of the human mind; and, assembling all nations in the unity of a worship becoming more and more rational, makes one single God of all divine forms; one single worship of all faiths; one single humanity of all nations.

Michael Angelo is the Moses of monumental Catholicism, such as it will one day be understood. He has raised the imperishable arch of future times, the Pantheon of deified reason.

NOTE VII.

At length, after having enjoyed Rome to satiety, I wished to see Naples. It was, above all, the tomb of Virgil, the cradle of Tasso, which attracted me thither. Countries for me have always been men. Naples is Virgil and Tasso. It seemed to me that they had lived yesterday, and that their ashes were yet warm. I saw in advance Posilipo and Sorrento, Vesuvius and the sea, through the atmosphere of their great and tender genius.

I started for Naples towards the end of the month of March. I travelled in a post-chaise with a French merchant who had

been seeking a travelling companion to diminish the expense of the journey. At a short distance from Velitrœ, we found the post-coach which ran between Rome and Naples, overturned on the roadside and riddled with bullets. The postboy, one postillion, and two horses had been killed. The men had just been borne into a neighboring hut. Torn despatches and pieces of letters floated upon the breeze. The brigands had returned in the direction of the Abruzzi. Detachments of French cavalry and infantry, from corps that were encamped at Terracina, were pursuing them amongst the rocks. We heard the fire of the sharpshooters, and saw along the whole side of the mountain small clouds of smoke which were followed by the reports of guns. From time to time we met bodies of French and Neapolitan troops, posted along the road. It was thus that travellers entered Naples in those days.

This highway-robbery had a political character. Murat reigned. The Calabrias still resisted; King Ferdinand, who had withdrawn into Sicily, supported the guerilla chiefs in the mountains with his subsidies. The famous *Fra-Diavolo* fought at the head of these bands. Their exploits were assassinations. We only found good order and security in the immediate vicinage of Naples. I arrived there on the first of April. A few days afterwards, I was joined by a young man of my age, with whom I had been united at college in the bonds of a friendship that was truly fraternal. His name was Aymon de Virieu. His life and my own were so completely commingled, from his childhood until his death, that our two existences were as parts of one another, and I have spoken of him in almost every instance where I have had to speak of myself. * * * * * * *
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NOTE VIII.

After the first description of my impressions at Naples, I find in my recollections the following fragment. It is in itself the most faithful and the most simple commentary on that union.

EPISODE.

NOTE I.

At Naples, I led nearly the same life of contemplation as at Rome in the old painter's house in the *Piazza di Spagna;* instead of spending my days in roaming amongst the remains of antiquity, however, I spent them wandering along the beach or gliding over the waves of the bay of Naples. I returned at night to the old monastery, where, thanks to the hospitality of one of my mother's relatives, I occupied a small cell which touched the leads, and whose balcony, festooned with pots of flowers and creeping plants, opened on the sea, Vesuvius, Castelamare, and Sorrento.

When the morning horizon was clear I could see the white house of Tasso, suspended over the sea like a swan's nest, sparkle in the sunbeams on the summit of a cliff of perpendicular yellow rocks which were washed by the waves. This sight ravished me. The gleam of the poet's house was reflected in the depths of my soul. It was like a ray of glory, which sparkled from afar on my youth and on my obscurity. I recalled to mind that Homeric scene in the great man's life, when, released from prison, pursued by the envy of the small and the calumny of the great, flouted even in his genius—his only treasure—he returned to Sorrento to seek a little rest, a little affection, or a little commiseration; and when, disguised as a mendicant, he presented himself to his sister to try her heart, and see whether she, at least, would recognise the one she had so dearly loved.

"She recognised him on the instant," says the ingenuous biographer, "notwithstanding his sickly pallor, his blanching beard, and his ragged cloak. She casts herself into his arms with more tenderness and mercy than if she had discovered her brother beneath the glittering garments of the courtiers of Ferrara. Her voice for a long time is smothered by sobs; she presses her brother to her heart. She washes his feet, brings him his father's mantle, has a festive repast prepared for him. But neither the one nor the other was able to touch the viands which had been set out for them, so full of tears were their hearts; and they spent the day in weeping, without

saying any thing to each other, gazing at the sea and thinking of their childhood."

NOTE II.

One day; it was in the beginning of summer, at the moment when the bay of Naples, with its hills, its white houses, its rocks carpeted with creeping plants, looks like a vase of verd-antique whitened by foam, and whose borders and handles are festooned with ivy and leafy vines; it was the season when the fishermen of Posilipo, who build their huts on its rocks and spread their nets on the fine sand of its little coves, cruise with security at a distance from land and go and fish at night two or three leagues at sea,—as far away as the cliffs of Capri, Procida, Ischia, and the middle of the gulf of Gaeta.

Some take torches with them, which they light to deceive the fish. The fish, mistaking the torchlight for the breaking of dawn, ascend towards the surface. A child, leaning over the prow of the boat, silently bends the link towards the wave, while the fisherman, burying his glance in the deep water, strives to discover his prey and to fold it in his net. These lights, red as the glare of the furnace, are reflected in long undulating furrows along the surface of the sea, like the lengthened trails of light which follow the queen of night over the waters. The heaving of the waves makes them oscillate, and prolongs their dazzling glimmer from billow to billow, as far as the first wave reflects it upon the waves that follow it. Light follows the laws of undulation, and only dies with the movement caused by the wake of the bark upon the waters.

NOTE III.

We often used to spend—my friend and I—whole hours seated on a shoal or on the humid ruins of the palace of Queen Jane, looking at these fantastic lights, and envying the errant and careless life of these poor fishermen.

A few months' sojourn in Naples, and habitual commingling with the men of the lower orders, during our jaunts into the

country and on the sea, had familiarized us with their strongly accentuated and sonorous language, in which the movements of the body and the eyes play a more conspicuous part than words. Philosophers by presentiment, and tired of the vain agitations of life ere we had known them, we often envied those happy *lazzaroni* who then thronged the strand and the quays of Naples, who spent their days sleeping on the sand in the shade of their little boats, or listening to the extemporized verses of their itinerant poets; and their evenings, dancing the *Tarentela* with young girls of their own caste, beneath some vine-clad arbor on the border of their sea. We were better acquainted with their habits, character, and manners than with those of the fashionable world, with which we never mingled. This life pleased us, and lulled to sleep in our bosoms those febrile movements of the soul which uselessly waste the imagination of young men before the hour when their destiny calls upon them to act or think.

My friend was twenty years of age; I, eighteen; hence we were both at that period of life when youth is permitted to confound its dreams with its realities. We resolved to form an acquaintance with these fishermen, and embark with them to lead the same life for a few days. Those warm and brilliant nights spent beneath the sail, in that cradle rocked by the waves, and under the deep and star-spangled sky, seemed to us one of the most mysterious pleasures of nature, to be seized upon and tasted, were it only for the purpose of describing it.

Free, and with no one to call us to account for our actions or our absence, on the morrow we put into execution what we had dreamed. As we rambled along the strand of *la Margellina*, which extends below the tomb of Virgil at the foot of Mount Posilipo, and where the fishermen of Naples run their boats on the sand and mend their nets, we saw an old man who was yet stout and hearty. He was shipping his fishing implements on board his gaudily-painted galley, whose stern was surmounted by a small carved image of Saint Francis. At that very moment, a child of twelve, his only rower, was carrying to the boat two loaves of bread, a cheese of buffalo's milk, as hard, shiny, and yellow as the pebbles of the shore, a few figs, and a stone jug containing water.

The old man's face, as well as the boy's, attracted us. We opened a conversation with him. The fisherman began to smile when we proposed that he should receive us as rowers, and take us with him to sea.

"You have not the hard hands which are needed to touch the handle of an oar," said he to us. "Your white fingers were made to hold pens, not wood: it would be a pity to harden them at sea."

"We are young," returned my friend, "and we wish to try all trades before we make choice of one. Yours pleases us because it is carried on under the sky and on the sea."

"You are right," replied the old fisherman. "It is a trade that contents the heart, and makes the mind place dependence in the protection of the saints. The fisherman is under the immediate care of heaven. Man knows not whence come the wind and the waves. The plane and the file are in the workman's hands, riches and favors are in the hands of the king; but the bark is in the hands of God."

This pious philosophy of the boatman attached us still more strongly to the idea of shipping with him. After resisting a long time, he at length consented. We agreed that each should give him two *carlini** a day to pay him for our apprenticeship and our nurture.

After this agreement was made, he sent the boy to *la Margellina* for an additional supply of bread, wine, dried cheese, and fruits. At the decline of day, we helped him to float his bark, and put out to sea.

NOTE IV.

The first night was delightful. The sea was as calm as a lake encircled by the mountains of Switzerland. As we increased the distance between our boat and the shore, we saw the glimmering lights in the windows of the palaces and on the quays of Naples sink and disappear beneath the dark line of the horizon. The lighthouses alone showed the line of the coast. Even their lamps were made to seem pale by the slender column of fire which shot up from the crater of Vesuvius. While the fisherman cast and drew in his net, and the torch vacillated in the hand of the drowsy boy, we now and then gave a slight impulsion to the bark, and hearkened with ravishment to the sonorous drops of water which trickled from our oars, and fell

* The *carlina* is worth about eight cents.—Tr.

harmoniously into the water, like pearls poured into a silver basin. We had long since doubled the headland of Posilipo, crossed the gulf of Pozzuoli, the bay of Baïa, and passed through the channel of the gulf of Gaeta, between Cape Miseno and the isle of Procida. We were on the open sea; sleep was beginning to overpower us. We stretched ourselves on our seats beside the boy.

The fisherman covered us over with the heavy sail which lay folded at the bottom of the boat. We slept thus between two waves, rocked by the gentle swell of a sea which hardly inclined the mast. When we again opened our eyes, it was broad day.

A brilliant sun decked the sea with ribands of fire, and showered its beams on the white houses of an unknown shore. A slight breeze, coming from that land, made the sail tremble above our heads, and drove us from cove to cove, and from rock to rock. It was the jagged and perpendicular coast of the charming isle of Ischia, which I was afterwards to inhabit so long and love so deeply. It appeared to me, for the first time, bathed in light, rising from the sea, losing itself in the blue of heaven, and blown like a poet's dream during the light slumbers of a summer's night. . . . . .

NOTE V.

The island of Ischia, which separates the gulf of Gaeta from the bay of Naples, and which is itself only separated from the isle of Procida by a narrow channel, is merely one single perpendicular mountain whose white brow plunges its jagged teeth into the sky. Its steep sides, furrowed by glens, ravines, and beds of torrents, are covered from top to bottom with the dark green foliage of chestnut-trees. Those of its plateaux which are nearest the sea and inclined towards the waves, are crowned with thatched cottages, rustic villas, and villages half hid beneath luxuriant vines. Each of these villages has its *marine*. This is the name given to the little harbor in which float the boats of the fishermen of the isle, and where the billows rock the masts of a few vessels with lateen sails. The yards touch the trees and the vine-arbors on the coast.

There is not one of those houses suspended to the slopes of

the mountain, hid at the bottom of its ravines, shooting up like pyramids on the top of its plateaux, leaning against its wood of chestnut-trees, shadowed by its cluster of pines, surrounded by its white arcades, and festooned with its hanging vines, which has not been the ideal dwelling, in dreams, of a poet or a lover.

Our eyes never grew tired of this spectacle. There was an abundance of fish on the coast. The fisherman had been successful through the night. We ran into one of the little coves of the island, to draw water from a spring hard by, and to rest ourselves upon the rocks. As the sun was sinking in the west, we returned to Naples, extended upon our benches. A square sail, stretched across a little mast in the bow of the boat, the *sheets* of which were held by the boy, sufficed to make us skim past the cliffs of Procida and of Cape Miseno, and to make the surface of the sea foam beneath us.

The aged fisherman and the boy, with our assistance, dragged the boat upon the sand, and carried their baskets of fish and shells into the sort of cellar in which they dwelt beneath the rocks of *la Margellina.*

NOTE VI.

On the day following, we gayly resumed our new trade. We successively skimmed over all the waves in the sea of Naples. We heedlessly followed the wind, wheresoever it blew us. In this manner we visited the island of Capri, from which the sinister shade of Tiberius still repulses the imagination; Cumæ and her temples, buried beneath the tufted laurel and wild fig-trees; Baïa and her sad shores, which seem to have grown old and gray like those Romans whose youth and pleasures they once sheltered; Portici and Pompéii, smiling beneath the lava and ashes of Vesuvius; Castelamare, whose tall and dense forests of laurel and wild chestnut-trees, reflected in the sea, cast a dark green shade over the ever-murmuring waves of her roadstead. In every place the old fisherman knew some family of fishermen like himself, from whom we received hospitality, when the sea was heavy and prevented our return to Naples.

For the space of two months we did not enter an inn. We

ved in the open air with the people, and led the frugal life that they led. We had made ourselves part of the people in order to be nearer nature. We almost wore their costume. We spoke their language, and the simplicity of their habits communicated to us, so to speak, the ingenuousness of their feelings.

On the other hand, this transformation cost my friend and me but little. Both reared in the country during the storms of the Revolution, which had destroyed or dispersed our families, in our childhood we had seen much of the life of the peasant; he, in the mountains of the Gresivaudan, with a nurse who had taken care of him during his mother's imprisonment; I, on the hills of the *Maconese*, in the small rustic dwelling in which my father and mother had sheltered their threatened nest. The only difference existing between the shepherd, or the husbandman of our mountains, and the fisherman of the bay of Naples, is in the site, the language, and the trade. The furrow, or the wave, inspires the same thoughts to the men who plough the earth or the sea. Nature speaks the same language to those who dwell with her on the mountain or on the billow.

We experienced this. In the midst of those simple-hearted men, we did not feel as if we were amongst strangers. The same instincts are a sort of relationship between men. The very monotony of that life pleased us while it rocked us to sleep. We marked with grief the rapid flight of summer and the approach of those autumn and winter days, after which we would have to return to our homes. Our anxious families were beginning to recall us. We banished this thought of departure as far as we could, and loved to fancy that the life we were then leading would never have an end.

NOTE VII.

Meanwhile, September was beginning to pour its showers and roll its thunders. The sea was less smooth. Our trade was more painful and sometimes became dangerous. The wind freshened, the waves foamed, and often rolled upon us and soaked us. We had purchased, on the mole, two of those thick brown woollen wrappers which the sailors and lazzaroni

of Naples throw over their shoulders in winter-time. The wide sleeves of those wrappers hang alongside of naked arms. The hood floats behind, or covers the brow, according to the weather,—sheltering the seaman's head from cold and rain, or allowing the breeze and the sunbeams to play with his wet locks.

One day, we started from *la Margellina*, on a sea as smooth as oil which was not rippled by the slightest breath, to go fish for red mullets and the first tunny along the coast of Cumæ, whither they are driven by the current at this season of the year. The red mists of morn floated halfway up the coast, and threatened a gale for evening. We hoped to be beforehand with it, and to have time to double Cape Miseno ere the heavy, slumbering sea would shake off its lethargy.

The fish were abundant. We wished to cast a few more nets. The wind took us by surprise; it fell from the summit of Epomeo, an immense mountain which o'ertops Ischia, with as much noise and weight as if the mountain itself were tumbling into the sea. It first levelled the liquid space around us, as the iron harrow smooths the earth and levels the furrows. Then the billows, recovering from their surprise, swelled with loud murmurs, and, in a few minutes, rose to such a height that they hid from our eyes the coast and the isles.

We were at an equal distance from the main-land and Ischia, and had already neared the channel which separates Cape Miseno from the Grecian isle of Procida. There was only one course for us to follow, and that was to enter the channel resolutely, and, if we succeeded in running through it, to throw ourselves to the left in the gulf of Baïa, and seek shelter in its tranquil waters.

The old fisherman did not hesitate. From the top of a wave, on which the equipoise of the boat suspended us a moment in a cloud of spray, he cast a rapid glance around him, like a man who ascends a tree to discover the path which he has lost, then throwing himself upon the tiller:

"To your oars, children!" cried he; "we must fly to the cape swifter than the wind; if it gets there before us, we are lost!"

We obeyed as the body obeys the instinct.

With eyes fixed on his eyes, to read in them the rapid indication of his direction, we bent to our oars, and now laboriously climbing the sides of the rising waves, anon plunging with

their foam into their depths, we strove to slacken our descent by the resistance of our oars in the water. Eight or ten billows of increasing size threw us into the narrowest part of the channel. But, as our pilot had said, the wind had got there before us, and in ingulfing itself between the cape and the point of the island, had acquired such force and weight that it tossed the sea and made it bubble up like furious lava; and the waves, not finding room to fly with sufficient speed from the hurricane which drove them, piled themselves up, sunk again, gushed forth, scattered themselves in every direction like crazy billows, and, making vain efforts to escape through the channel, dashed themselves with terrible force against the perpendicular rocks of Cape Miseno, around which they raised a pillar of foam whose spray was scattered as far as our boat.

NOTE VIII.

It was madness to attempt to pass through that strait with a bark which had neither deck, nor mast, nor sail, and which one single spout of foam could fill and sink. The fisherman cast a glance on the cape lighted up by its column of sea-spray,—a glance which I shall never forget,—then, making the sign of the cross, exclaimed:

"To pass is impossible; to turn back into the open sea is still more impossible. We have only one chance left: we must reach Procida, or perish."

Inexperienced as we were in the practices of the sea, we felt all the difficulty of such a manœuvre in a gale of wind. In sailing towards the cape, we had the wind astern, driving us before it; we followed the sea which was driven in the same direction as ourselves, and the waves, as they rose, carried us up with them. Hence the chance of being buried in their hollows was not so great. But to reach Procida, the twinkle of whose evening lights we could perceive on our right, we had to take the waves obliquely, and, so to speak, glide in their troughs towards the coast, exposing our side to the billows and our slender bulwarks to the wind. Necessity, however, forbade all hesitation. The fisherman, motioning us to raise our oars, took advantage of the interval between one wave and another, to put about. We steered for Procida,

and floated like a bit of sea-weed which is tossed from wave to wave, and which one billow snatches from another.

NOTE IX.

We made but little headway; night was coming on. The scum, the spray, the clouds, which the gale rolled in tattered shreds over the channel, increased the gloom. The old man had ordered the boy to light one of his torches, either to shed a little light on his path o'er the deep, or to make known to the sailors of Procida that a boat was going to destruction in the channel, and to ask, not their assistance, but their prayers.

A sublime and awful spectacle was the sight of that poor child, grasping with one hand the little mast which arose out of the bow of the boat, and with the other holding aloft that torch with the red glare, whose flame and smoke, writhing in the wind, scorched both his fingers and his flowing hair. That floating spark appearing on the summit of the waves, and disappearing in their depths, seemingly on the point of dying, and yet constantly burning, was as the symbol of those four human existences which were struggling between life and death in the darkness and agony of the night.

NOTE X.

Three hours, whose minutes had the duration of the thoughts that counted them, lagged by in this manner. The moon arose, and, as is usual, the wind rose with it, more furious than ever. Had we carried the least bit of canvas, it would have capsized us twenty times. Although the sides of our boat, which were very low, offered but little resistance to the hurricane, there were moments, nevertheless, when it seemed as if it would tear our very keel out of the waters, and at times it made us spin round like a withered leaf blown from the tree.

We shipped a great deal of water; we were hardly able to bail it out as fast as it entered. At times we felt the planks

sink under us like a coffin which is lowered into a grave. The weight of the water made the boat less obedient, and might make her too slow to rise from between the waves. One single second's delay, and all was over.

The old man, who was utterly unable to speak, made signs to us, with tears in his eyes, to throw overboard all that cumbered the bottom of the boat. Jugs of water, baskets of fish, the two large sails, the iron anchor, coils of rope, his bundles of heavy clothes and our own, even our thick woollen wrappers soaked with water, all passed over the side. The poor boatman cast a sorrowful glance at all his wealth floating on the waves. The boat rose and skimmed lightly o'er the brows of the billows, like a courser freed from his burden.

We entered almost imperceptibly into smoother waters, somewhat sheltered by the westerly point of Procida. The wind lulled, the flame of the torch straightened itself, the moon made a large blue opening in the clouds, the waves, as they retreated, smoothed their angry crests and ceased to foam above our heads. Little by little the sea became short, and subsided into ripples almost as gentle as those in a sheltered cove; and the dark shadow of the cliff of Procida intercepted the line of the horizon. We were in the waters of the middle of the isle.

NOTE XI.

The sea was too rough at the point to permit us to seek the harbor. We had to make up our minds to approach the isle on its side, and in the midst of its shoals.

"Let us banish all fears, children," said the fisherman to us, surveying the shore by the light of the torch; "the Madonna has saved us. We have reached land, and we will sleep in my house to-night."

We thought that he had lost his senses, for the only dwelling that we knew him to possess was the dismal cellar at *la Margellina*, and to return to it before the dead of night, we would have to re-enter the channel, double the cape, and again affront the dangers of the roaring sea, from which we had so recently escaped.

But, reading our thoughts in our eyes, and smiling at the expression of astonishment on our faces, he continued:

"Rest easy, young men, we will get there, and yet not a single wave shall wet us."

Then he explained to us that he was born in *Procida;* that he yet owned, on this side of the isle, the cabin and the garden which had belonged to his father; and that, at that very moment, his aged wife with her grand-daughter, the sister of Beppino, our young reefer, and two other grandchildren, were at his house, drying figs and gathering the grapes which they sold in Naples.

"A few more strokes of the oar," added he, "and we will drink water from the spring which runs clearer than the wine of Ischia."

These words reanimated our courage; we rowed something like the distance of a league along the straight and foam-covered shore of Procida. From time to time the boy raised his torch, and shook it above his head. Its sinister glare shone on the rocks, and showed us one continuous and unapproachable wall of stone. At last, after rowing round a spur of rock which projected into the sea in the form of a bastion, we saw the cliff sink and form a hollow, something like a breach in the wall of an enclosure; one movement of the tiller made us turn straight towards the shore,—and three last waves threw our worried bark between two shoals, around which the water bubbled and foamed.

NOTE XII.

The prow, when it touched the rock, sent forth a sharp and loud noise like the cracking of a board which falls and breaks. We jumped into the sea, secured the boat as best we could with the remains of the rigging, and followed the old man and the child who walked before us.

We climbed a sort of narrow flight of stairs against the side of the cliff, where the chisel in the rock and the tread of man in the earth had formed uneven steps, which were made slippery by the spray. These stairs in the solid rock were completed by a few artificial steps which had been formed by burying long poles in the crevices of the natural wall, and casting over those trembling supports the tarred planks gathered from wrecks, or fagots of the branches of chestnut-trees covered with their dry leaves.

After having thus slowly climbed about four or five hundred steps, we found ourselves in a little yard, suspended on high, and surrounded by a parapet of gray stone. At the extremity of the yard yawned two dark arches, which looked as though they might lead to a storeroom for wine. Above these massive arches, two rounded arcades supported a flat roof, whose borders were garnished with pots of rosemary and sweet basil. Beneath the arcades, you saw a rustic gallery, where ears of corn, hanging from the roof, shone in the moonlight like golden lustres.

A door of boards, badly put together, opened on this gallery. Towards the right, the ground on which the little house rested unevenly rose to a level with the floor of the gallery. On this side, a large fig-tree and a few tortuous branches of a grape-vine crowned one of the corners of the house, mingling their leaves and their fruit beneath the openings of the gallery, and casting two or three serpentine festoons over the walls of the arcades. These branches almost hid two low windows, which opened on this side of the garden; and had it not been for those windows, the massive, square, low house might have been taken for one of the gray rocks of that coast, or for one of those blocks of hardened lava, round which the chestnut-tree, the ivy, and the grape-vine, wrap and entwine their branches, and in which the vine-dresser of Castelamare or Sorrento digs a grotto closed with a door to store his wine beside the vine that bore it.

The old man, my friend, and I, fatigued by the long and steep ascent which we had just climbed, and by the weight of our oars, which we bore upon our shoulders, paused a moment to take breath in this yard. But the child, throwing his oar on a heap of weeds, and lightly springing up the stairs, began to knock at one of the windows with the handle of his torch, which was still burning, crying the while in joyous tones to his grandmother and his sister:

"Mother! sister! *Madre! Sorellina! Gaetana! Graziella!* awake! open the door: it's father, it's me, and two strangers that we have brought with us."

We heard a voice, half awakened, but still clear and sweet, vent a few exclamations of surprise at the back of the house. Then the shutters of one of the windows were pushed half open by a naked white arm protruding from a loose sleeve, and we saw, by the light of the torch which the boy on tip-

toe raised towards the window, the ravishing face of a young girl appear at the opening.

Startled out of her slumbers by her brother's voice, Graziella had neither had the thought nor the time to arrange a night-dress for herself. She had rushed barefooted to the window in all the disorder in which she slumbered on her bed. One half of her long black tresses hung upon one of her cheeks; the other half wound around her neck, then, borne to the other side of her shoulder by the wind, which blew with violence, beat the half-open shutter, and tossed against her face like the raven's wing shaken by the blast.

With both her hands the young girl rubbed her eyes, as she raised her elbows, and dilated her shoulders with that first natural movement of a child who is suddenly awakened, and wishes to banish sleep. Her under-garment, fastened around her neck, only revealed a tall and slender form, on which the first undulations of youth were hardly perceptible beneath the linen. Her large oval eyes were of that uncertain color, between deep black and dark sea-blue, which softens the beam by the liquidness of the glance, and unites in equal proportions, in the eyes of woman, tenderness of soul and energy of feeling—a heavenly hue which the eyes of the women of Asia and Italy borrow from the scorching heat of their days of fire and the serene azure of their skies, their seas, and their nights. Her cheeks were full, round, firm in their contour, but of a somewhat pale complexion, and slightly browned by the climate—not the sickly pallor of the North, but that healthy whiteness of the South, which looks like the color which marble wears after it has been buffeted for ages by the winds and waves. Her mouth, whose lips were wider apart and thicker than those of the women in our latitude, was encircled by the lines of candor and goodness. Her small, but dazzling teeth shone in the unsteady glare of the torch like those pearly shells which yawn on the seashore, beneath the ripple of the sun-heated waters.

While she was speaking to her little brother, her vivacious, somewhat sharp, and strongly accentuated words, half carried away by the wind, sounded like music in our ears. The expression of her face, which was as rapid in its movements as the gleam of the torch which illuminated her features, changed in an instant from surprise to dismay, from affright to joy, from tenderness to gayety; then, when she perceived us behind the thick trunk of the fig-tree, she withdrew in confusion

from the window, allowed the released shutter to beat at random against the wall, took just time enough to awaken her grandmother, and half clothe herself, came and opened the door beneath the arcades for us, and kissed her grandfather and her brother with warmth and emotion.

NOTE XIII.

The old grandmother soon after made her appearance, bearing in her hand a red earthen lamp which lighted up her thin, pale features, and her hair, which was as white as the skeins of yarn which lay in tufts on the table around her distaff. She kissed her husband's hand and the boy's forehead. All the narrative which is contained in these lines was exchanged in a few words and a few gestures between the members of that poor family. We did not hear all. We stood somewhat aloof in order not to constrain our hosts in their outpourings of heart. They were poor; we were strangers; we owed them respect. Our attitude of reserve in the background and near the door silently testified that respect.

Graziella from time to time cast at us a glance which betrayed surprise, and which almost seemed as if it came from the depths of a dream. So soon as the father had finished his recital, the aged mother fell upon her knees near the hearth; Graziella ascended to the terrace, and returned with a sprig of rosemary and a few orange-flowers which looked like large white stars; she took a chair, and with long golden pins drawn from her own hair fastened the nosegay in front of a small besmoked statue of the Virgin which stood above the door, and in front of which burned a lamp. We understood that this was a return of thanks to her divine protectress, for having saved her grandfather and her brother, and we participated in her gratitude.

NOTE XIV.

The interior of the house was as naked and looked as much like a rock as the exterior. Nothing but the unplastered

walls, merely whitened with a little lime. Lizards, roused out of their slumbers by the light, crawled and made a confused noise in the crevices between the stones and beneath the fern-leaves which served as a bed for the children. Swallows' nests, from which protruded little black heads in which sparkled brilliant and uneasy eyes, hung from the bark-covered rafters which supported the roof. Graziella and her grandmother slept together on the same bed, covered with pieces of sails, in the back chamber. Baskets of fruit and a mule's pack-saddle lay upon the floor.

The fisherman turned towards us with a sort of shamefacedness, as he showed us with his hand the meanness of his dwelling; then he conducted us to the terrace, the place of honor in the East and in the south of Italy. With the assistance of the boy and Graziella, he made a sort of shed by leaning one end of our oars on the parapet-wall of the terrace, the other on the floor. He covered this shelter over with twenty or more fagots of chestnut-twigs freshly cut on the mountain; beneath it he spread a few bundles of fern; he brought us two pieces of bread, some fresh water and figs, and invited us to repose ourselves.

The fatigues and emotions of the day made our slumbers sudden and deep. When we awoke, the swallows were already screeching around our bed, as they skimmed over the terrace to carry off the crumbs of our supper; and the sun, already high in the heavens, heated the fagots which served us as a roof, and made our shed as warm as an oven.

We remained some time stretched upon our bed of fern in that state of semi-sleep which allows the mental man to feel and think before the material man has the courage to arise and act. We interchanged a few inarticulate words, which were interrupted by long pauses and which fell back again into our dreams. The fishing of the preceding day, the boat rocking beneath our feet, the furious sea, the inaccessible rocks, Graziella's face between the window-shutters, seen by the dancing light of the torch; all these things flitted through our brains, crossing one another and mingling in confusion.

We were aroused out of that somnolency by the sobs and reproaches of the grandmother, who was speaking to her husband in the house. The sound of her voice and a few words reached our ears through the chimney, the top of which arose through the terrace. The poor woman was lamenting the loss of her beautiful jars, of the anchor, of the coils of almost

new rope, and especially of the two beautiful sails spun by her, woven out of her own hemp, and which we had had the cruelty to throw into the sea to save our lives.

"What business hadst thou," said she to the downcast and silent old man, "to take these two strangers, these two Frenchmen with thee? Dost thou not know that they are pagans, (*pagani*,) and that they carry misfortune and impiety with them? The saints have punished thee. They have stripped us of our riches—but, thank the Almighty! they have not yet robbed us of our souls."

The poor man knew not what to answer. But Graziella, with the authority and the fretfulness of a child whose grandmother permits her to say whatever she pleases, rebelled against the injustice of these reproaches, and, taking the part of the old man, replied to her grandmother:

"Who told you that these strangers were *pagans?* Have *pagans* such merciful looks for poor people? do *pagans* make the sign of the cross before the images of saints? Well, now, I tell you that yesterday when you fell upon your knees to thank God, and when I fastened the nosegay in front of the statue of the Madonna, I saw them bow their heads as if they were praying, and make the sign of the cross on their breasts; and I even saw a tear sparkle in the eyes of the youngest and fall upon his hand."

"It was a drop of sea-water which dripped from his hair," acrimoniously resumed the old woman.

"And I tell you that it was a tear," angrily retorted Graziella. "The wind which was blowing, had had full time to dry their hair, from the seashore up to the top of the cliff. But the wind does not dry the heart. Hence, I say it again, they had water in their eyes."

We felt that we had an all-powerful protectress in the family, for the grandmother made no reply, and ceased to grumble.

NOTE XV.

We hastened to descend and offer our thanks to the poor family, for the hospitality which we had received. We found the fisherman, the old mother, Beppo, Graziella, and even the little children, all making ready to descend towards the seashore,

to visit the bark which had been forsaken since the preceding night, and to see whether it was sufficiently secured from the gale, which still continued. We followed them with lowered brows, as timid as guests who have been the cause of a misfortune in a family, and who are not certain of the feelings entertained towards them by its members.

The fisherman and his wife led the way; Graziella, holding one of her little brothers by the hand, and carrying the other on her arm, followed them. We brought up the rear, in silence. At the last turn of one of the flights of steps, whence you can see the shoals which have hitherto been hid from sight by a ridge of rock, we heard a wail of grief which simultaneously arose from the lips of the fisherman and his aged partner. We saw them raise their arms to heaven, wring their hands as if in the phrensy of despair, beat their foreheads and eyes with their clinched fists, and tear out tufts of their white hair, which were borne away by the wind and whirled against the rocks.

Graziella and the children soon raised their voices, and mingled their cries with those of their grandparents. They all sprang down the remaining steps like creatures deprived of reason, rushed towards the shoals, advanced into the very fringe of foam driven to the shore by the immense waves; and prostrated themselves, some on their knees, others on their backs, the old woman with her face between her hands, and her head buried in the humid sand.

We were contemplating this scene of despair from the top of the last little promontory, without sufficient strength either to advance or to retreat. The boat fastened to the rock, but without any anchor at the stern to steady it, had been raised by the waves during the night, and dashed to pieces against the points of the very ridges which should have protected it. One half of the poor skiff still swung from the end of the rope which we had tied to the rock the night before. It was yet struggling with a sinister noise, like that of the voices of drowning men, dying away in a hoarse and heart-rending wail.

The other parts of the hull, the poop, the mast, the timbers, the painted planks, were scattered in wild confusion along the strand, like the bones of dead bodies torn from one another by wolves, after a battle. When we at last reached the sands, the old fisherman was running from one of these pieces of the wreck to the other. He would pick them up, gaze at them with tearless eyes, then let them fall at his feet, to go further

on. Graziella was sitting on the ground weeping, with her face hid in her apron. The children, with their naked feet in the sea, were scrambling and crying after the floating fragments of the wreck, doing their best to bring them to the shore.

As to the old woman, she continued to moan and to speak at the same time. We could only catch confused accents and shreds of lamentations, which rent the air and made the heart bleed.

"O, ferocious sea! deaf sea! sea worse than the demons of hell! sea without any heart and without any honor," cried she, with whole vocabularies of abuse, shaking her clinched hand at the waves, "why didst thou not swallow us? all of us? since thou hast swallowed that which gave us bread? There! there! there! gulp me, piecemeal, since thou hast not swallowed me whole!"

Saying this, she sat up on her haunches, and cast shreds of her dress, along with handfuls of her hair, into the waters. She moved her arms as if she were beating the billows, and spurned their foam with her feet; then alternating from anger to lamentation, from passion to tenderness, she resumed her seat in the sand, leaned her brow on her hands, and gazed with streaming eyes on the sundered planks, as they beat upon the rocks.

"Poor boat!" whined she, as if those fragments had been the remains of a loved being, but lately deprived of feeling, "is this the destiny we owed thee? Should we not have perished with thee? should we not have perished together, as we had lived? On that spot! falling to pieces, crumbling away, grinding into dust; crying, even after death, on the rock to which thou hast called us all the night, and where we should have come to thy relief! What dost thou think of us? Thou hast served us faithfully, and we have betrayed, forsaken, lost thee! Lost thee, there! so near our own door, within the reach of thy master's voice! dashed upon the shore like the carcass of the faithful dog, that the waves cast at the feet of the master who had drowned him!"

Then her tears choked her utterance; soon after she began again, and enumerated all the virtues of her bark, all the money that it had cost, and all the memories which were entwined for her around that poor floating wreck.

"Was it for this," said she, "that we had had it so well repaired and so nicely painted at the end of the last tunny season? Was it for this that my poor son, ere he died and

left his three fatherless, motherless children, had built it with so much care and love, almost entirely with his own hands? Whenever I went to get the baskets on board, I knew the marks that his axe had left in the timbers, and I kissed them in memory of the one who is gone! The sharks and fishes of the sea will kiss them now! During the long winter evenings, he had carved with his own hand the image of Saint Francis, on a board, and had fastened it above the stern, to protect it from the storm. O, bad saint! How has he shown his gratitude? What has he done with my son, his wife, and the boat which that son left us, to enable us to earn food for his poor children? How has he protected himself; and where is his own image, the sport of the waves?"

"Mother! mother!" cried one of the children, raising from between two rocks a splinter of the wreck which had been cast high and dry by the billows; "here's the saint!"

The grandam forgot all her anger and all her blasphemies; rushed towards the child, heedless of the surge through which she had to paddle; seized the piece of board which had been carved by her son, and pressed it to her lips, and washed it with tears. Then she returned to her former place, seated herself again, and said nothing more.

NOTE XVI.

We helped Beppo and the old man to pick up, one by one, all the fragments of the boat. We dragged the mutilated keel further on the strand. We made a heap of these bits of wreck, some portions of which might yet be useful to these poor people; we piled large stones above them, in order that the waves, if they rose, should not scatter these precious remains of the boat, and then returned mournfully, and at a great distance in the rear of our hosts, to the house. The destruction of the bark and the state of the sea, precluded our departure.

After having taken, with downcast eyes and silent lips, a piece of bread and some goat's milk, which were brought to us by Graziella beneath the fig-tree near the fountain, we left the house of mourning, and went wandering through the high arbor of grape-vines, and beneath the olive-trees, on the elevated plateau of the island.

NOTE XVII.

My friend and I hardly spoke to one another; but the same thought animated us both, and we instinctively threaded all the paths which ran towards the eastern point of the island, and which would certainly lead us to the not far distant town of Procida. A few goatherds and several young girls clothed in Grecian costume, and carrying jars of oil on their heads, set us on the right road two or three times. After an hour's march we at length reached the town.

"This is a sad adventure," at last said my friend to me.

"We must transform it into joy for these poor people," answered I.

"I was thinking of that," resumed he, jingling a purse, well filled with golden sequins, in his leathern belt.

"So was I; but I only have five or six sequins with me. Nevertheless, as I have shared in the misfortune, I must also share in the reparation."

"I am the richest of the two," returned my friend; "I have an open credit at a banker's in Naples. I will advance all. We will settle our accounts in France."

NOTE XVIII.

Conversing thus, we nimbly descended the sloping streets of Procida. We soon reached the *marine*. This is the name given to the strand near a roadstead, or harbor, in the Archipelago and on the shores of Italy. The strand was covered with boats belonging to Ischia, Procida, and Naples, which had been forced to seek shelter in those waters by the preceding day's storm. The seamen and sailors either slumbered in the sun, lulled by the decreasing murmur of the waves, or sat in groups conversing upon the mole. From our dress, and the woollen caps which covered our heads, they took us for young sailors from Tuscany or Genoa, who had been landed by one of the brigs which bring oil and wine to Ischia and Procida.

We strolled along the *marine*, searching with our eyes for a stanch and well-rigged vessel, which might be easily worked

by two men, and which in shape and proportions would bear the strongest possible resemblance to the boat that we had lost. We had but little trouble to find what we wished. It belonged to a wealthy fisherman of the island, who owned several others. This one had been in use but a few months. We went straight to the owner, whose house was pointed out to us by the children on the beach.

This man was blithe, tender-hearted, and good. He was moved by the recital which we made to him of the disasters of the night and of the affliction of his fellow-countrymen. It did not make him lose a piastre on the cost of his vessel,—neither did it make him exaggerate its price; and the bargain was made at thirty-two golden sequins, which were paid to him out of hand by my friend. In consideration of this sum, the boat, with entirely new rigging, sails, jars, ropes, iron anchor,—all was ours.

We even completed the outfit by purchasing in one of the stores on the wharf two woollen wrappers of a brownish hue—one for the old man, the other for the boy; to these we added various kinds of nets, fish-baskets, and a few coarse domestic utensils for women's use. We agreed with the dealer in boats that we would pay him on the morrow three sequins more if the vessel were brought, on that very day, to a part of the coast which we designated to him. As the storm was lulling, and as the highlands of the isle protected the sea somewhat from the wind, on this side, he promised to fulfil our wishes, and we started to return overland to the house of *Andrea*.

NOTE XIX.

We trod the road back leisurely, seating ourselves beneath every tree and in the shade of every vine-arbor, chatting, dreaming, stopping every young *Procidana* to price the basket of figs, medlars, or grapes which she carried on her head or shoulders, and giving the hours time to slip by. When, from the brow of a headland, we perceived our boat stealthily gliding in the shade of the coast, we increased our pace in order to reach the appointed spot as soon as the rowers.

No sound of footstep or voice was to be heard in the little house or in the vineyard which surrounded it. Two beautiful

pigeons with wide feet thickly tufted with feathers and white wings spotted with black, pecking grains of corn on the parapet-wall of the terrace, were the only signs of life which animated the house. We noiselessly ascended to the roof; here we found the whole family wrapt in slumber. With the exception of the children, whose pretty heads rested cheek-by-jole on the arm of Graziella, all lay in the attitude of exhaustion caused by grief.

The old mother had her head upon her knees, and her drowsy breath yet seemed loaded with sobs. The father was stretched out upon his back, with arms folded, in the broad sun. The swallows, as they skimmed past, almost touched his gray locks. Flies swarmed on his brow covered with perspiration. Two deep furrows which wound down to his lips attested that man's stern strength had yielded in his bosom, and that he had fallen asleep with tears in his eyes.

This sad spectacle lacerated our very hearts. The thought of the happiness which we were about to restore to these poor people consoled us again. We awakened them. At the feet of Graziella and her young brothers, on the naked floor of the terrace, we cast the loaves of fresh bread, the salted provisions, the grapes, the oranges, the figs with which we had loaded ourselves on the road. The young girl and the children did not dare to rise in the midst of that shower of plenty which fell around them as if from heaven. The father thanked us in the name of his family. The grandam looked on with glassy eyes. The expression of her features was more like anger than indifference.

"Come, Andrea," said my friend to the old man, "man should not weep twice for the loss of that which he can regain by toil and courage. There are planks in the forest and sails in the hemp which grows. The life of man is the only thing that does not grow again when grief wears it out. A day's tears exhaust more strength than a year's toil. Come down with us, you and your wife and your children. We are your sailors. This evening we will help you to bring up into the yard the remains of our wreck. You can make enclosures, beds, tables, and other articles of furniture for your family out of them. It will be grateful to you one of these days to slumber peacefully amid the planks that have rocked you so long on the waves."

"May there be enough of them to make us coffins at least!" muttered the grandam.

NOTE XX.

They all got up, however, and followed us slowly down the steps leading to the beach; but it was easy to perceive that the sight of the sea and the murmur of the waves were painful to them. I will not attempt to describe the surprise and joy of these poor people, when, from the top of the first landing above the sands, their eyes fell upon the new boat, glittering in the sun and drawn up high and dry alongside of the fragments of the old one, and when my friend told them:

"She is yours!"

They all fell upon their knees, as if overpowered by the same delight, each one on the nearest step, to thank the Almighty, ere they could find words to express their gratitude to us. But their happy looks were all the thanks we needed. They started up in obedience to the summons of my friend. They leaped after him towards the boat. They first walked around it at a respectful distance, and as if they feared that it had something unearthly about it and would vanish like a vision. Then they approached a little nearer; then they touched it, and, after they had done so, raised the hand they had laid upon the boat to their forehead and their lips and kissed it. Finally, they sent forth screams of admiration and joy, and, joining hands, from the old woman down to the smallest child, danced around the hull.

NOTE XXI.

Beppo was the first to climb the side of the boat. Standing on the little orlop-deck at the prow, he drew from the hold, piece by piece, all the rigging with which we had stowed it,—the anchor, the ropes, the jars with four handles, the beautiful new sails, the baskets, the wrappers with wide sleeves; he made the anchor ring, he stacked the oars in his hands and raised them above his head; he unfurled the canvas, he passed his fingers over the rough nap of the cloaks; he showed all these treasures to his grandfather, to his grandmother, to his sister, venting exclamations of delight and stamping with happiness the while. The father, the mother, and Graziella, with tears in their eyes, glanced alternately at the boat and at their guests.

The sailors who had brought the vessel from the town of Procida wept also, in their hiding-place behind the rocks. Everybody blessed us. Graziella, whose gratitude was more serious in its expression, approached her grandmother, and I heard her murmur as she pointed her finger at us:

"You said that they were pagans; but I said that they were more likely to be angels perhaps; who was right?"

The old woman threw herself at our feet and begged us to forgive her for her suspicions. From that time forward she loved us almost as much as she loved her grand-daughter and Beppo.

NOTE XXII.

We dismissed the sailors, first paying them the three sequins according to agreement. We each loaded ourself with some portion of the rigging which cumbered the hold, and, instead of the remains of that happy family's fortune, we brought back to their house all these riches. In the evening, after supper, by the light of the lamp, Beppo removed from the head of his grandmother's bed the piece of splintered board on which the image of *Saint Francis* had been carved by his father; he squared it with a saw, cleaned it with a knife, smoothed it and painted it anew. It was his intention to fasten it in the inside of the prow on the morrow, in order that the new vessel should contain something of the old.

It was thus that the nations of antiquity, whenever they reared a new temple on the site of another temple, took care to use in the building of the new some of the materials, or, at least, a column belonging to the old, in order that there should be something ancient and sacred in the modern structure, and that the useless and rude memorial itself should have its worship and its prestige in the heart, amid the marvels with which they adorned the house of the gods. Man is man ever and everywhere. His sentient nature always has the same instincts, whether the object which excites them be the Parthenon, or Saint Peter's at Rome, or the poor fisherman's boat on the strand of Procida.

NOTE XXIII.

That night was probably the happiest of all the nights that Providence had destined that house to enjoy from the moment that it shot out of the rock, until the period when it was to crumble into dust again. We slept, lulled by the gusts of wind in the olive-trees and the roar of the billows on the strand, and guarded by the slanting rays of the moon which shone upon our terrace. When we awoke, the sky was as clear as polished crystal, the sea as dark and as streaked with foam as if the waters had perspired from swiftness and lassitude. But the wind continued to howl with increased fury. The white spray which the waves accumulated on the point of Cape Miseno, rose to a still greater height than on the preceding day. It bathed the coast of Cumæ in a flux and reflux of brilliant haze, which rose and fell incessantly. Not a sail was to be seen on either the gulf of Gaeta or on that of Baïa. The scray whipped the foam with its white wings—the only bird whose element is the tempest, in which it screeches with joy as it whirls around the wreck, like those accursed inhabitants of the Bay of the Departed, awaiting their prey from vessels going to destruction.

Without confiding it to one another, we experienced a secret delight at thus being imprisoned by the gale in the house and vineyard of the fisherman. It gave us time to savor the pleasure of our situation and enjoy the happiness of that poor family, to which we were becoming attached, like two children.

The winds and waves held us captives here nine days. We almost wished, I in particular, that the tempest would never have an end, and that some fatal and involuntary necessity would keep us prisoners for years on the spot where we were so happy. And yet our days flew by without emotion and without change. Nothing proves more conclusively how little is required to make up the sum of happiness, when the heart is young and finds pleasure in every thing. Thus is it that the simplest food sustains and renews the life of the body, when seasoned by appetite, and when the organs are new and healthy. . . . . .

NOTE XXIV.

To awake to the twittering of the swallows that grazed our roof of leaves as they skimmed o'er the terrace on which we had slept; to listen to the childlike voice of Graziella, who, through fear of disturbing the slumbers of the two strangers, warbled in an under-tone beneath the grape-vine; to descend with rapid strides to the beach and plunge into the waves and swim a few minutes around a small basin, whose fine sand sparkled beneath the pellucid and deep waters, and where the swell and foam of the open sea never entered; to slowly reascend to the house, drying and warming our hair and shoulders the while in the sun; to breakfast under the vine, on a piece of bread and some buffalo's-milk cheese, which the young girl brought to us and broke with us; to drink some of the clear, cool spring-water drawn by her in a small earthen jar of an oblong shape, which she blushingly held in her arms while we pressed our lips to the orifice; then to help the family in the numberless little rustic labors of the house and garden—propping up the fences which surrounded the vineyard and the parts of walls which supported the terraces—removing the large stones which had fallen during the winter from the top of those walls upon the slips of vine, and which encroached on the little cultivation which could be practised between the twigs—carrying to the storehouse the enormous yellow gourds, each one of which was a load for a man, then cutting off their filaments, which covered the ground with their large leaves and entangled themselves around our feet—digging between each row of twigs, under the high trellis, a little trench in the dry earth, to catch the rain-water which irrigated their roots for a long time—digging, for the same purpose, sorts of funnel-shaped wells at the foot of the fig and lemon trees;—such were our matin occupations, until the hour when the sun's rays fell perpendicularly on the roof, the garden, and the yard, and forced us to seek shelter beneath the vine-clad arbors. Here the transparency and reverberation of the grape-vine leaves lent the floating shadows a glowing and somewhat golden hue.

BOOK VIII.

NOTE I.

Graziella would then return to the house either to spin by the side of her grandmother, or prepare the mid-day repast. As to the old fisherman and Beppo, they spent all their time on the seashore, trimming their new vessel, making such improvements in it as were prompted by their love for their bark, and trying nets in places sheltered by submarine ridges of rocks. At noon, they always brought us a few crabs or some sea-eels with skins brighter than newly-melted lead. These the grandam would fry in olive-oil. According to the custom of the country, they kept this oil at the bottom of a little well, dug in the rock close by the house, and closed by a large stone in which an iron ring had been cramped. Several cucumbers fried in the same manner, and cut in thin slices, and a few fresh shellfish, similar to our muscles, which they call *frutti di mare*, sea-fruit, composed our frugal dinner—the principal and most succulent repast of the day. Our dessert consisted of Muscadine grapes in long yellow clusters, gathered in the morning by Graziella, preserved on their stems and under their leaves, and placed before us in flat fruit-baskets of twisted willow. A sprig or two of fennel, green and raw, dipped in pepper, the odor of which, resembling that of aniseed, perfumes the lips and stimulates the heart, served us in lieu of liquors and coffee, according to the custom of the sailors and peasants of Naples. After dinner, my friend and I would go in search of some shady, cool spot on the brow of the cliff, in sight of the sea and the coast of Baïa, and there spend the burning hours of the day, gazing, dreaming, and reading until four or five o'clock in the afternoon.

NOTE II.

We had only saved from the waves three odd volumes, and even these were only spared to us because we had not

placed them in the bags containing our clothes, which we had thrown into the sea: one of them was an Italian volume by *Ugo Foscolo,* entitled, *Letters of Jacopo Ortis,* a sort of half-political, half-romantic Werther, in which the love for his country's liberties is mingled in the bosom of a young Italian with his passion for a fair Venetian. The double enthusiasm nourished by that twofold flame of the lover and the patriot, kindles a fever in the soul of Ortis which is too intense for the sensitive and sickly man, and which at length ends in self-destruction. This book, which is a literal but brilliant and highly-colored copy of Goethe's *Werther,* was then in the hands of all the young men who, like ourselves, cherished in their souls that double dream of all those who are worthy to dream of any thing greater than nature—love and liberty.

NOTE III.

In vain did the police regulations of Bonaparte and Murat proscribe both the author and his work. The author's asylum was in the hearts of all the Italian patriots and the liberals of Europe. The book's sanctuary was in the bosoms of young men like ourselves; we hid it there to inhale its maxims. Of the other two volumes that we had saved, one was *Paul and Virginia,* by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, that hand-book of ingenuous love; a book which seems like a page of the world's childhood torn from the history of the human heart and preserved with all its purity and all the tears with which it is saturated—tears of contagion for all eyes of sixteen.

The other was a volume of *Tacitus*—pages polluted by debauchery, shame, and blood, but in which stoical virtue wields the pen and assumes the apparent impassibility of History, to inspire those who understand her teachings, with hatred of tyranny, strength for great sacrifices, and thirst for a generous death.

These three books happened to be in harmony with the three feelings which made our young souls vibrate even then, as if by presentiment: love, enthusiasm for the enfranchisement of Italy and France, and a passion for that political action and the movement of great things which Tacitus depicted to us, and for which he tempered our souls at an early age

in the blood of his pencil and the fire of antique virtue. We used to read aloud, by turns, sometimes admiring, sometimes weeping, sometimes dreaming. These readings would be interrupted by long pauses and the interchange of a few exclamations, which for us formed the random commentary of our feelings, and which the winds bore away along with our dreams.

NOTE IV.

We would place ourselves, by the power of imagination, in some of those romantic or historical situations which the poet or the historian had just related to us. We would form for ourselves an ideal notion of a lover or a citizen, of private or public life, of happiness or virtue. We would take pleasure in combining those great events, those marvellous accidents of revolutionary times, in which the most obscure men are made known to the multitude by their genius, and summoned, as if by their names, to oppose tyranny and save whole nations; then —the victims of the inconstancy and ingratitude of nations— condemned to die on the scaffold, in the eyes of the ages that misjudge them and of posterity which vindicates them.

There was no part, no matter how heroic in its nature, which would not have found our souls equal to the emergency. We prepared ourselves for every thing, and if fortune, some day, should not realize these great trials in which we mentally cast ourselves, we took our revenge in advance by scorning fortune. Within ourselves we had this, the consolation of all energetic souls: if our lives remained useless, ordinary, and obscure, it would be because fortune had not favored us, not because we had not seconded fortune.

NOTE V

When the sun declined in the west, we took long strolls through the island. We rambled over it in every direction. We would go to the town to purchase bread and such vegetables as did not grow in Andrea's garden. Sometimes we

would bring back with us a little tobacco, that *opium* of sailors, which animates them at sea and consoles them on land. We would return at nightfall with our pockets and our hands overflowing with our humble bounties. In the evening, the family would assemble on the roof, which is called the *astrico* in Naples, to await the hours of slumber. Nothing can be more picturesque, during the beautiful nights of that climate, than the scene on the *astrico*, in the soft, clear light of the moon.

In the country, the low, square house looks like an antique pedestal, supporting living groups and animated statues. All the inhabitants of the house ascend to it, move about it, or seat themselves on it in various attitudes; the light of the moon or the glare of a lamp projects and marks out all these profiles on the blue ground of the firmament. You there see the old mother spinning, the father smoking his pipe of baked clay with a reed tube, the young boys, with their elbows on the ledge, singing in long drawling notes those seamen's or peasants' songs whose prolonged or vibrating accents somewhat resemble the groans of wood tortured by the waves, or the strident tones of the grasshopper in the sun; finally, the young girls, with their short dresses, their naked feet, their green jackets laced with gold or silk, and their long black tresses floating on their shoulders, and covered with a handkerchief tied in large knots at the nape of the neck, to protect their hair from the dust.

The maidens dance here either alone or with their sisters; one holds a guitar, the other tosses above her head a tabor hung round with little brass bells. These two instruments, the one plaintive and light, the other monotonous and dull, agree marvellously well to express, almost without the aid of art, the two alternate notes of man's heart—sorrow and joy. You can hear them of a summer's night on almost all the roofs in the isles and in the country of Naples, and even on the boats. This aërial concert which pursues the ear from place to place, from the sea even into the mountains, resembles the hum of an additional insect—warmed into life beneath that lovely sky. This poor insect is man! who sings his youth and his loves before God for a few days, and then is silent for all eternity. I have never heard these notes, cast upon the air from the summit of the *astrici*, without stopping, and without feeling my heart swell, as if it would burst with internal joy or with melancholy utterly beyond my control.

NOTE VI.

Such were also the attitudes, the harmonies, and the voices on the terrace of Andrea's house. Graziella played the guitar, and Beppino, making his childish fingers rebound on the little tabor which had served to lull him to sleep in his cradle, accompanied his sister. Although the instruments were gay, and although the attitudes were those of joy, the tunes were mournful, and the slow notes entered deep into the heart and touched its slumbering fibres. It is always thus with music, whenever it is not an empty sport of the senses, but a harmonious wail of the passions which passes from the soul through the voice. All its accents are sighs, all its tones roll brine with their sound. You can never knock at man's heart somewhat rudely without causing tears to gush from it; so full is nature, in its depths, of melancholy! and so easily does all that moves it make its dregs fly to our lips, and its clouds to our eyes!...

NOTE VII.

Even when the young girl, in obedience to our request, modestly arose to dance the *tarentela* to the sound of the tamborine beaten by her brother, and when, carried away by the whirling movement of that national dance, she turned in rapid gyrations, her arms gracefully elevated, imitating the rattle of the castanets with her fingers, and increasing the steps of her naked feet, like drops of water, on the terrace! yes, even then, there was in the air, in the postures, in the very phrensy of that delirium in motion, something serious and mournful, as if all that light-heartedness were only a fleeting madness, and as if, to secure a ray of happiness, even youth and beauty were constrained to drown themselves in giddiness, and to intoxicate themselves with movement, even unto dementation!

NOTE VIII.

We would much oftener converse seriously with our hosts, and make them relate to us their lives, their traditions, or their

domestic reminiscences. Every family is a story, or even a poem to the one who knows how to turn its leaves. This one also had its nobility, its riches, its prestige in the far-distant past.

Andrea's grandfather was a Greek merchant on the island of Egina. Persecuted on account of his religion by the Pacha of Athens, one night he had embarked his wife, his daughters, his sons, and his fortune, on board one of the vessels which he owned for commercial purposes. He had taken refuge in Procida, where he had correspondents, and where the population was Greek, like himself. He had purchased a great deal of property, of which the only remaining vestiges were the small farm-house in which we were staying, and the family name graven on a few tombstones in the burial-place of the town. The daughters had died nuns in the convent of the isle. The sons had lost all their fortune in the tempests which had swallowed up their vessels. The family had fallen into decay. They had even changed their handsome Grecian appellation, and assumed the obscure name of some fisherman of Procida.

"When a house falls to ruin," said Andrea to us, "its very last stone is swept away in the course of time. All that remains of the entire possessions of my grandfather under the canopy of heaven, are my two oars, the bark which you have restored to me, this cabin, which cannot support its owners, and the grace of God."

NOTE IX.

The mother and daughter asked us to tell them, in turn, who we were, whence we came, and what were the occupations of our families? If we had our father, our mother, our brothers, our sisters, a house, fig-trees, and grape-vines? Why we had deserted them all at so early an age, to come and row, read, write, dream in the sunshine, and sleep upon the earth in the bay of Naples? All that we could say, we could not make them understand that we had done so merely to gaze at the clouds and the waters, to exhale our souls in the sunlight; to feel our youth ferment within us, and to gather impressions, feelings, thoughts, which we would probably write afterwards

in verses, like those which they saw written in our books, or like those which the *improvisatori* of Naples recited, on Sunday evenings, to the seamen on the mole, or at *la Margellina.*

"You are making sport of me," said Graziella to us, bursting into laughter. "You poets! Why, you neither have the bristling hair nor the wild eyes of those to whom that name is given on the quays of *la marine.* You poets! and not even know how to draw a single note from the guitar! What accompaniment, then, have you for the songs that you make?"

Then she would shake her head and pout her lips, and fret because we would not tell her the truth.

NOTE X.

Sometimes an ugly suspicion would flash across her brain, and cast doubt and a shadow of fear over her glance. But this never lasted long. We would hear her say in a low tone to her grandmother:

"No! it's impossible; they are not refugees, driven from their native land for some bad action. They are too young, too good, too handsome to be familiar with evil."

We would then amuse ourselves by relating to her some terrible deed of villany, of which we would proclaim ourselves the authors. The contrast between our white and unruffled brows, our serene eyes, our smiling lips, our open hearts, and the fantastic crimes which we supposed ourselves to have committed, would make her and her brother likewise laugh boisterously, and soon put to flight every cloud and possibility of suspicion.

NOTE XI.

Graziella often asked us what we could possibly find in our books to read all day long. She thought that they were prayer-books; for she had never seen books elsewhere than at church, in the hands of those of the faithful who knew how to read, and who followed the sacred words of the priest in their missals. She thought we were very pious, since we spent

whole days muttering mysterious words: it surprised her, however, that we did not make ourselves priests, or hermits, in one of the seminaries at Naples, or in some monastery on the island. To undeceive her, we attempted two or three times to read, by translating them into the common dialect of the country, fragments of Foscolo, and a few beautiful passages from our Tacitus.

We fancied that these patriotic sighs of the Italian exile, and these deep tragedies of imperial Rome, would make a vivid impression on our simple-hearted auditory. For the populace have something of love of country in their instincts, something of heroism in their feelings, something of the drama in their glance. The things which they particularly remember, are great downfalls and noble deaths. But we soon discovered that those speeches and those scenes which exerted such a powerful influence over us, had no effect upon those ingenuous souls. The sentiment of political liberty, that mental luxury of men of leisure, does not descend so low amongst the people.

These poor creatures could not imagine why Ortis gave himself up to despair, and killed himself, when he could have enjoyed all the real pleasures of life, walk about in idleness, gaze at the sun, love his sweetheart, and pray to God on the green and fertile banks of the Brenta.

"Why torment one's self thus about notions which do not descend into the heart?" said they. "What matters it to him whether the Austrians or the French rule in Milan? He is a madman to allow such things to grieve him so sorely."

And they ceased to listen.

NOTE XII.

As to Tacitus, he was still less comprehensible to them. The Empire or the Republic, those men who killed one another, this one because he wished to reign, the other, because he would not be a slave; those crimes committed for the sake of the throne, virtues practised for the sake of glory, deaths endured for the sake of posterity, moved them not. Those tempests of history burst too high above their heads to affect them. To them they were like claps of thunder pealing from

the far-distant mountain, of which no heed is taken, because they only fall on the peaks, and neither shake the fisherman's mast nor the farmer's roof.

Tacitus is only popular with politicians and philosophers; he is the Plato of history. His sensibility is too refined for the masses. To appreciate him, one must have lived amid the storms in the public square, or the mysterious intrigues of the palace. Strip his scenes of liberty, ambition, and glory, what have they left? They are the three principal actors in his dramas. Now, these three passions are unknown to the people, because they are passions of the brain, and because the people are only familiar with the passions of the heart. We were made aware of this by the coldness and astonishment which these fragments threw around us.

We then tried, one evening, to read Paul and Virginia to them. I was the one who translated it as I read, because I had been so much in the habit of perusing it that I may say I almost knew it by heart. Familiarized with the language by a longer sojourn in Italy, it cost me no trouble to find expressions, and they flowed from my lips like a mother tongue. This reading had hardly commenced, when the countenances of our little auditory underwent a change, and assumed an expression of attention and thoughtfulness—the certain indication of emotion of the heart. We had found the note which vibrates harmoniously in the souls of all men, of every age, and in every station,—the feeling note, the universal note, the note which contains in one single sound the eternal truth of real art—Nature, Love, and God.

NOTE XIII.

I had read but a very few pages, ere the old people, the maiden, and even the children, had already changed their attitudes. The fisherman, with his elbow on his knee, and his ear bent in my direction, forgot to inhale the smoke of his pipe. The grandam, seated opposite to me, held her clasped hands beneath her chin, in the posture of those poor women who listen to the word of God, crouching close to the pavement of the temple. Beppo had come down from the seat he occupied a few minutes before on the wall of the terrace.

He had noiselessly laid his guitar on the roof. He now pressed his open hand on the neck of the instrument, through fear that the wind might stir the strings. Graziella, who usually remained at a short distance, approached me imperceptibly, as if fascinated by some power of attraction concealed within the book.

With her back against the wall, at the foot of which I myself was extended, she drew towards me little by little, leaning on her left hand, which rested on the floor, in the attitude of the wounded gladiator. She gazed, with her large eyes wide open, now at the book, anon at my lips, whence flowed the recital, and again at the empty space between my lips and the volume, as if striving to catch a glimpse of the invisible spirit which interpreted it to me. I heard her uneven breath stop short, or come and go with great rapidity, according to the palpitations of the drama, like the quick heavings of a person who ascends an acclivity, and stops now and then to respire. Ere I had got halfway in the story, the poor child had forgotten the somewhat wild reserve with which she had hitherto treated me. I felt the warmth of her breath on my hand. Her tresses trembled on my brow. Two or three scalding tears which had trickled down her cheeks, blotted the page close by my fingers.

NOTE XIV.

Excepting the slow and monotonous tones of my voice, which translated literally that poem of the heart to fishermen of the sea, no sound was to be heard, save the dull and distant throbs of the sea, which beat against the shore away down yonder beneath our feet. That very noise was in harmony with the reading. It was like the foreseen catastrophe of the story, rolling in advance through the air at the commencement and during the continuation of the narrative. The more this narrative unfolded itself, the more it seemed to enchain our simple listeners. When I hesitated, by chance, in the choice of a word, with which to express the exact meaning of the original, Graziella, who, for some time past, had been holding the lamp and sheltering it from the wind with her apron, would approach it close to the page and almost burn the book in her impatience; as if she supposed that the bril-

liancy of the flame would make the intellectual sense gush forth to my eyes and give speedier life to the words on my lips. Without removing my gaze from the page, I would smilingly push away the lamp with my hand, and find my fingers warm with her tears.

NOTE XV.

When I came to the moment at which Virginia, who is summoned back to France by her aunt, feels, so to speak, the rending of her being in two, but still makes an effort to console Paul beneath the banana-trees, by speaking to him of a return, and showing him the sea which is about to bear her away, I closed the volume and put off the reading until the morrow.

This was a terrible blow for those poor people. Graziella threw herself upon her knees before me, and then before my friend, to implore us to finish the story. But all in vain. We wished to prolong the interest for her, and the charm of the test for ourselves. Then she snatched the book from my hands. She opened it, as if, by the mere power of her will, she expected to be able to understand its characters. She spoke to it, she kissed it. She afterwards replaced it respectfully upon my knees, and, clasping her hands, gazed at me like a supplicant.

Her countenance, usually so serene and so cheerful when at rest, although somewhat austere, had suddenly found in the passion and sympathetic influence of the narrative, something of the animation and pathetic agitation of the story. You would have said that a sudden revolution had changed that beautiful piece of marble into flesh and tears. The young girl felt her hitherto dormant soul reveal itself to her in the soul of Virginia. She seemed to have attained the maturity of six additional years in that short half-hour. The stormy hues of passion tinged her brow, her cheeks, and the bluish white of her eyes. It was like a tranquil and sheltered sheet of water on which sunbeams, winds, and shadows had suddenly come to struggle for the first time. We could not tire of looking at her in that attitude. She, who until then had only inspired us with mirth, almost inspired us with respect. But

all her prayers to us to continue were useless; we did not wish to exhaust our power at one single time, and it gave us too much pleasure to make her beauteous tears flow, to drain their source in one single day. She went away pouting, and extinguished the lamp with a movement of anger.

NOTE XVI.

The day following, when I met her beneath the vine-arbor, and attempted to speak to her, she turned away as if she wished to hide her tears, and refused to answer me. It was evident, from the small dark circle around her eyes, from the increasing wanness of her cheek and the slight and graceful depression of the corners of her mouth, that she had not slept, and that her heart was yet big with the imaginary sorrows of the past evening. Marvellous power of a book, which acts on the hearts of an illiterate child and an ignorant family with all the force of reality, and the perusal of which is an event in the life of those hearts!

It was because the poem had translated nature as I had translated the poem, and because those events which are so simple—the cradle of those two children at the feet of two poor mothers, their innocent love, their cruel separation, that return thwarted by death, that shipwreck and those two graves enclosing one single heart beneath the banana-trees—are things which are felt and understood by every one, from the king's palace down to the cabin of the fisherman. Poets travel great distances in search of genius, whilst it is in the heart, and whilst a few very simple notes piously and adventitiously drawn from that instrument which is attuned by God himself, suffice to make a whole age weep, and become as popular as love, and as sympathetic as feeling. The sublime wearies, the beautiful deceives, the pathetic is alone infallible in art. He who knows how to move the heart, knows every thing. There is more genius in one tear than in all the museums and all the libraries in the universe. Man is like the tree which is shaken to make it shed its fruit: he never can be moved, but tears must fall.

NOTE XVII.

During the day the house was as gloomy as if some sad event had happened in the humble family. The meals were eaten almost without the interchange of a single word. It was easy to see that Graziella took no pleasure or interest in her occupations, either in the garden or on the roof. She often turned. her head to see whether the sun was declining, and it was evident that she was impatient for the approach of evening.

When evening at length came round, after we had taken our usual places on the *astrico*, I reopened the volume and ended the story amid the sobs of my listeners. Father, mother, children, my friend and I, all participated in the general emotion. The sad and solemn sound of my voice lent itself, without my knowledge, to the sadness of the adventures and the solemnity of the words. Towards the termination of the narrative, this seemed to come from a distance, and to fall from a great height upon the soul with the hollow accent of an empty bosom in which the heart no longer beats, and which no longer participates in the affairs of this earth except through grief, religion, and remembrance.

NOTE XVIII.

It was impossible for us to utter vain words after this recital. Graziella remained motionless, in the attitude in which she had been listening, and as if she were still listening. Silence, that applause of all lasting and deep impressions, reigned supreme, and was broken by no one. Everybody respected the thought in others which he felt within himself. The flame of the exhausted lamp flickered and faded away imperceptibly without ever a hand being raised to give it new life. The family arose and stealthily retired. We remained alone, my friend and I, confounded by the omnipotence of truth, simplicity, and feeling over all men, all ages, and all countries.

Perhaps another emotion was already beginning to stir the bottom of our hearts also. The ravishing image of Graziella, transformed by her tears and initiated in love by sorrow, floated through our dreams along with the heavenly creation

of Virginia. These two names and these two children, commingled in fleeting visions, delighted or saddened our uneasy slumbers until morn. During the evening of that day and of the two days following, we had to read the same story over again to the young girl. Had we read it a hundred times in succession she would have asked for it again. It is the nature of those dreamy and vivid imaginations of the South, never to seek for truth in poetry or music; it may be said that music and poetry are merely themes on which every one broiders his own feelings; one can feed, like the people, without satiety, on the same story and the same tune for ages. Has nature itself (that highest of all music and poesy) more than two or three words and two or three tunes, which are always the same, and with which she saddens or gladdens man from his dawning breath to his latest gasp?

NOTE XIX.

At sunrise, on the ninth day, the equinoctial wind at length fell, and in a few hours after the sea again became a summer's sea. The very mountains on the coast of Naples, as well as the waves and the clouds, seemed to swim in a clearer, bluer fluid than during the months of excessive heat, as if the sea, the firmament and the mountains had already felt that first shiver of winter, which crystallizes the air and makes it sparkle like the congealed waters of glaciers. The yellow leaves of the grape-vine and the brown leaves of the fig-trees were beginning to fall in the yard and strew the earth. The grapes were gathered. The figs, dried in the sun on the *astrico,* were packed in coarse baskets made of sea-grass platted by the women. The boat was impatient to try the sea, and the old fisherman anxious to take his family back to *la Margellina.* The house and the *astrico* were cleaned. The spring was covered over with a large stone in order that its basin should not be tainted by the dead leaves and the streams of winter. All the oil was drawn out of the little well in the rock and poured into jars, which the children carried down to the seashore by running short sticks through their handles. The mattress and covers were rolled up and bound round with ropes. The lamp was lighted for the last time beneath the deserted image

on the hearth. A last prayer was said before the Madonna, to commend to her care the house, the fig-tree, the vineyard, which they were thus about to leave for several months. Then the door was locked. The key was hid at the bottom of an ivy-covered cleft in the rocks, in order that the fisherman, in case he should return during the winter, might find it and pay a visit to his deserted dwelling. Then we descended to the beach, helping the poor family to carry and stow away in the boat their oil, bread, and fruits.

BOOK IX.

NOTE I.

Our return to Naples, running along the coast in the gulf of Baïa and the tortuous slopes of Posilipo, was a downright holiday for the young girl, for the children, and for us, and a real triumph for Andrea. We entered *la Margellina* at nightfall, singing joyously. The old friends and neighbors of the fisherman could not tire in their admiration of his new boat. They helped him to unload it and drag it on shore. As we had forbidden him to tell how he came by it, little attention was paid to us. After having drawn the bark upon the strand, and carried the baskets of figs and grapes to a place above Andrea's cellar, near the threshold of three low chambers occupied by the grandam, the little children, and Graziella, we slipped away unnoticed. We moved, not without certain twinges of the heart, through the tumultuous noise of the populous streets of Naples, and re-entered our own lodgings.

NOTE II.

It was our intention, after a few days' repose in Naples, to resume the same life with the fisherman, as often as the sea would permit. We had accustomed ourselves so well to the

simplicity of our garments, and the nakedness of the boat, within the last three months, that the beds and furniture of our rooms and our ordinary clothes seemed irksome and fatiguing superfluities to us. We hoped not to have to endure such annoyances long. But, on the morrow, when we went to the post-office for our belated letters, my friend found one from his mother. In it she called her son immediately back to France, to be present at the nuptials of his sister. His brother-in-law was to come as far as Rome to meet him. From the date of the letter he must have arrived there already. There was no time to be lost. He had to set out.

I should have left Naples with him. I hardly know what charm of loneliness and adventure held me back. The life of a sailor, the fisherman's cabin, Graziella's image probably, were in some way concerned, but very remotely. The delirium of freedom, the pride to show that I was able to take care of myself at a distance of three hundred leagues from my own country, the love of the vague and unknown,—that aërial perspective of all young imaginations,—were more closely concerned.

We parted with manly feeling and regret. He promised to return to me as soon as he had discharged his duties as a son and brother. He lent me fifty louis to fill the hole which the last six months had made in my purse, and started on his journey homeward.

NOTE III.

This departure, the absence of the friend who was to me what an elder brother is to a brother who is scarcely more than a child, left me in a loneliness which each hour made deeper, and in which I felt myself sinking as in an abyss. All my thoughts, all my feelings, all my words, which formerly evaporated in my interchange of words, feelings, and thoughts with him, now remained, and rotted and became gloomy in my soul, and fell back upon my heart like a weight which I could not shake off. That noise in which nothing replied to me—that throng, in which no one knew my name—that chamber in which no glance shone upon me—that life in a public house in which one is constantly rubbing against strangers, in which one sits at the silent board alongside of faces that are ever

changing and ever indifferent—those books which you have read a hundred times, and whose motionless characters always repeat to you the same words in the same phrases, and at the same place; all this, which had seemed so delightful to me at Rome and in Naples, previous to our excursions and our loose and errant life during the summer, now appeared like a slow death to me. My heart was drowning itself in melancholy.

For a few days, I dragged this melancholy from street to street, from theatre to theatre, from book to book, wholly unable to shake it off; then at last it vanquished me. I fell ill, of that malady called home-sickness. My head was heavy, my limbs could not support me. I was pale and haggard. I no longer ate any thing. Silence made me mournful, noise was painful to me; I spent the nights in sleeplessness, and the days upon my bed, without the desire, or even the strength to rise. The aged relative of my mother, the only one who could have taken an interest in my situation, had gone to spend several months at thirty leagues distance from Naples, in the *Abruzzi*, where he wished to establish certain manufactories. I sent for a doctor; he came, looked at me, felt my pulse, and told me that I had no malady. The truth is that I had a malady for which his science had no remedy, a malady of the soul and the imagination. He took his leave. I saw him no more.

NOTE IV.

I felt so ill the next day, however, that I searched my memory to find if there was any one from whom I might expect some assistance and a little pity in case I should not be able to rise again. The picture of the humble family of the fisherman at *la Margellina*, in whose midst I yet lived in imagination, naturally presented itself to my mind. I sent the child who waited on me in quest of Andrea, with instructions to tell the old man that the younger of the two strangers was ill and wished to see him.

When the child reached *la Margellina*, Andrea was at sea with Beppino; the grandam was busy selling fish on the quays of *Chiaja*. Graziella alone was at home with her little brothers. She hardly took time to intrust them to a neigh-

bor, and clothe herself in her newest Procidan garments ; she followed the child, who showed her the street, the old convent, and preceded her up the stairs.

I heard a gentle tap at the door of my room. It turned upon its hinges as if moved by an invisible hand. I perceived Graziella. She sent forth a cry of commiseration when her eyes fell upon me. She advanced a few steps, or rather sprang towards my couch ; then, checking herself and halting, with her folded hands hanging on her apron, and her head bowed towards her left shoulder, in the attitude of Pity, she said in an under-tone, as if talking to herself:

"How pale he is, and how can a few days have worked such a change in his face!—But where is the other one?" added she, turning and looking around the apartment for the one who had been my room-mate.

"He is gone," said I, "and I am all alone, and unknown in Naples."

"Gone!" cried she, "leaving you thus alone, and ill! Why, then, he did not love you!—Ah! had I been in his place, I would not have gone away, not I! and yet I am not your brother, and have only known you since the day of the storm."

NOTE V.

I explained to her that at the time my friend left me I was not sick.

"But how happens it," vivaciously resumed she, with a tone of mingled reproach and tenderness, "that you have not remembered that you had other friends at *la Margellina?* Ah! I see the reason," mournfully pursued she, casting a glance at her sleeves and the skirts of her dress, "it is because we are poor people, and would have made you blush with shame had we entered this beautiful house. No matter," continued she, wiping her eyes, which she had not once removed from my brow and my white arms lying listlessly on the bed, "even if we had been despised, we would have come, nevertheless."

"Poor Graziella!" replied I, with a smile. "God keep me from the day when I shall be ashamed of those who love me!"

NOTE VI.

She seated herself on a chair at the foot of my bed, and we conversed awhile.

The sound of her voice, the serenity of her glance, the trusting ease and placidity of her attitude, the ingenuousness of her countenance, the abrupt, and at the same time plaintive accent of those women of the isles, which reminds one here, as well as in the East, of the submissive tones of the slave in the very palpitations of love, the remembrance of the glorious days spent in the cabin and in the sunshine with her—that sunshine of Procida which seemed to me even then to stream from her brow, her body, and her feet, and light up my gloomy chamber; all this, while I was looking at her and speaking to her, made me so forgetful of my languor and my pain, that I fancied myself suddenly cured. It seemed to me, that after her departure I should be able to get up and walk. Nevertheless, I felt such satisfaction in her presence, that I prolonged the conversation as much as possible, and detained her under a thousand pretexts, through fear that she would leave me too soon, and take with her the happiness I enjoyed.

She tended me during a portion of the day without fear, without affected reserve, without any false modesty, as a sister tends a brother, forgetting that he is a man. She went and bought some oranges for me. She used her beautiful teeth to tear off their rind, in order that their juice might flow into my glass when she pressed them between her fingers. She removed from her neck a small silver medal which depended from a black string, and which had slumbered in her bosom. She fastened it with a pin to the white curtain of my bed. She assured me that I would soon be cured by the virtue of the holy image. Then, as day was beginning to decline, she left me, not without returning twenty times from the door to my bedside, to ask me if I wanted any thing else, and to counsel me very earnestly to pray with great devotion to the image ere I closed my eyes in sleep.

NOTE VII.

She had haraly gone out of the room, when, either from the virtue of the image, and the prayers which she undoubtedly

made to it herself, or the soothing influence of that vision of tenderness and interest which had visited me in the form of Graziella, or because the delightful diversion which I had enjoyed in her presence and conversation had charmed and appeased the morbid irritation of my whole being, I closed my eyes and slept soundly and peacefully.

When I awoke the next day, and perceived the orange-peel lying on the floor of my chamber, Graziella's chair still turned towards my bed, as she had left it, and as if she were about to return to her seat, the little medal suspended to my bed-curtains by the black silken necklace, and all the traces of that presence and those cares of a woman which I had lacked for so long a time, it seemed to me at first, ere I was yet well aroused, that during the night my mother or one of my sisters had entered my room. It was only when I opened my eyes to their full extent, and collected my scattered thoughts one by one, that the face of Graziella appeared to me as I had seen it the day before.

The sun was so bright, rest had restored such strength to my limbs, the solitude of my chamber weighed so heavily on my heart, the wish to hear once again the sound of a well-known voice was so strong within me, that I instantly arose from my bed, feeble and unsteady as I was. I ate the remainder of the oranges, got into a hackney *carricolo*, and instinctively ordered the driver to take me in the direction of *la Margellina*.

NOTE VIII.

So soon as I reached Andrea's low dwelling, I ascended the stairs which led to the platform above the cellar, and on which opened the rooms occupied by the family. On the *astrico* I found Graziella, her grandmother, the old fisherman, Beppino, and the urchins. They were about to sally forth at that very moment, in their best clothes, for the purpose of paying me a visit. They each bore in a basket, or in a handkerchief, some present or other, such as those poor people had imagined would be most agreeable or most beneficial to an invalid. This one had a *fiasco* of the golden white wine of Ischia, which, instead of a cork, had a stopper made of rosemary and

aromatic herbs, which perfumed the vase; another, dried figs; a third, some medlars; the little children, oranges. Graziella's heart had entered the bosoms of all the members of the family.

NOTE IX.

They all vented a cry of surprise when they saw me appear, still pale and feeble, but erect and smiling before them. Graziella allowed the fruit which she held in her apron to fall upon the floor, and joyously clapping her hands, ran towards me—

"I told you," cried she, "that the image would cure you, if it only rested on your bed one single night! Did I deceive you?"

I wished to return the medal to her, and I drew it from my bosom, where I had placed it before leaving my apartment.

"Kiss it first," said she to me.

I did as she commanded, and at the same time left a little of the kiss on the fingers which had been extended to receive back the image.

"I will restore it to you if you fall sick again," added she, throwing the necklace over her head, and hiding the medal in her bosom; "it will serve for two."

We then seated ourselves on the terrace, in the morning sun. All the members of that poor family looked as happy as if they had found a brother, or a child, after a long absence from home. Time, which is absolutely necessary for the formation of intimate friendships in the higher classes, is not requisite amongst the lower orders. Hearts open themselves without any mistrust, and are fathomed instantaneously, because there is no suspicion of interested motives beneath an outward show of feeling. The soul forms more ties and relationships in one week amongst the men of nature, than in ten years amongst the men of society. This family and I were already kinsfolk.

We reciprocally asked one another what good or evil had befallen us since we last had parted. The poor family was in a vein of good fortune. The boat had been blessed. The nets were lucky. Their trade had never been so productive.

The grandam was unable to supply the wants of the people before her own door; Beppino, proud and strong, was worth a sailor twenty years old, although he was only twelve. Finally, Graziella was learning a trade which was far above the humble profession of her family. Her wages, already large for the services of a young girl, and which would still increase with the increase of her capacity, would be sufficient for the clothing and maintenance of her little brothers, and enable her even to put aside a little dowry for herself, against the time she should be old enough and have an inclination to make love.

These were the expressions of her relatives. She was a *coraller*, that is to say, she was learning to carve coral. The trade and manufacture of coral then formed the principal wealth of the working classes in the towns on the coast of Italy. One of Graziella's uncles, the brother of her departed mother, was a foreman in the largest coral-manufactory in Naples. Rich, for one in his station, and directing the numerous workmen and women who could not supply the demands for that article, which at that period was in use as a luxury all over Europe, he had thought of his niece, and come to the house, a few days before, to enroll her amongst his assistants. He had brought her coral and tools, and had given her the first lessons in his very simple art. The other workwomen were required to work at the manufactory.

Graziella, being the sole guardian of the children, during the constant and necessary absences of her grandmother and the fisherman, plied her trade at home. Her uncle, who could not leave his work, had lately sent his nephew, Graziella's cousin, in his stead—a youth of about twenty, sedate, modest, steady, and a superior workman; but simple in mind, rickety, and somewhat deformed in body. He came in the evening, after the closing of the manufactory, to examine his cousin's work, instruct her in the use of her tools, and also to give her lessons in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

"Let us hope," said the grandmother to me while Graziella turned away her eyes, "that this will turn to the profit of both, and that the master will become the servant of his bride."

I saw that in the old woman's mind there were views of pride and ambition for her grand-daughter. But Graziella had no suspicion of this.

NOTE X.

The young girl took me by the hand and led me into her room to make me admire the little articles of coral which she had already carved and polished. They were nicely arranged in little pasteboard boxes, lined with cotton, on the foot of her bed. She tried to shape a piece in my presence. I drove the wheel of the turning-lathe with the extremity of my foot, opposite her, while she presented the red branch of coral to the circular saw, which cut it with a grating noise. She then rounded these pieces, by holding them between the ends of her fingers and rubbing them on a grindstone.

The rosy dust covered her hands, and, even flying up to her face, powdered her lips and her cheeks with a slight coat of red which lent additional brilliancy to her eyes, and made them seem bluer. Then she wiped her features, laughing the while, and shook her long black tresses, scattering the dust all over me in turn.

"Is not this a beautiful trade for a daughter of the sea like me?" asked she. "We are indebted to the sea for every thing: from my grandfather's boat and the bread we eat, down to these necklaces and ear-rings with which I will deck my own person, perhaps, one of these days, after I have polished and fashioned a great many for those who are richer and handsomer than I."

The morning slipped by thus in conversation, playfulness, and toil, without my once thinking of taking my leave. At mid-day, I shared the family's repast. The sunshine, the open air, contentment of mind, and the frugality of the board,—on which there were only a few fried fishes, some preserved fruit brought up from the cellar, and bread,—had restored my appetite and strength. In the afternoon, I helped the old fisherman to mend the meshes of an old net, which lay on the *astrico.*

Graziella, whose foot we could hear turning the grindstone in measured time, the noise of the grandam's spinning-wheel, and the voices of the children, who were playing with oranges on the front step of the house, melodiously accompanied our work. Graziella ever and anon came out upon the balcony to shake her ringlets; we would then interchange a glance, a friendly word, a smile. I felt happy, even to the very depths of my soul, without knowing the cause of my felicity. I wished

that I had been one of the aloe-plants rooted in the enclosure of the garden, or one of the lizards that basked in the sunshine at our feet, and lived in the crevices in the walls of the house inhabited by that poor family.

NOTE XI.

But a shadow came over my soul and my features with the approach of the shades of evening. The thought that I had to return to my traveller's quarters, made me mournful. Graziella was the first to notice this. She went and whispered a few words in her grandmother's ear.

"Why leave us thus?" asked the old woman, as if she were speaking to one of her own children. "Were we not good friends at Procida? Are we not the same at Naples? You look like a bird that has lost its mother, and whirls, crying, around every strange nest. Come and live in ours, if you think it good enough for such a gentleman as you are. There are only three rooms in the house, but Beppino sleeps in the boat. The children's chamber will do for Graziella, provided she is allowed to work during the day in the one in which you will sleep. Take her room, and remain with us to await your friend's return. For it grieves one to think that such a good and serious young man as you are, should be all alone in Naples."

The fisherman, Beppino, and even the little children, who already loved the stranger, rejoiced at the good woman's idea. They pressed me earnestly, and all at the same time, to accept her offer. Graziella said nothing, but the anxiety with which she awaited my answer to the entreaties of her relatives, was perceptible, although she strove to veil it under an assumed appearance of abstraction. At each of the arguments of delicacy which I advanced, not to accept their proffer, she patted her foot on the floor with a convulsive and involuntary movement.

At length I turned my eyes towards her. I saw that the white of her beautiful orbs was whiter and more brilliant than usual, and that she was crushing between her fingers and breaking off, one by one, the branches of a plant of sweet basil, which grew in an earthen pot on the balcony. This gesture

was more expressive and comprehensible to me, than numberless long speeches would have been. I accepted the community of life which was offered to me. Graziella clapped her hands and leaped with joy; and rushed into her room, without once turning her head, as if with the determination to take me at my word, and not give me time to retract.

NOTE XII.

Graziella called Beppino. In an instant she and her brother carried into the children's room her bed, her plain furniture, her little mirror with its frame of painted wood, the brass lamp, the two or three images of the Virgin which had been fastened against the walls with pins, the table, and the little turning-lathe on which she carved the coral. They drew water from the well, sprinkled some of it over the floor with their hands, and carefully swept the coral-dust off the walls and from the floor; they placed on the window-ledge two pots of the greenest and most odoriferous balsam and mignonette they could find on the *astrico*. They could not have evinced more care in the preparation and polishing of the nuptial chamber, if they had expected Beppo to enter his father's house with his bride that night. I sportively and laughingly aided them in this pastime.

When every thing was ready, I took Beppino and the fisherman with me to purchase and bring back the few articles of furniture I needed. I bought a small iron bed complete, a pine-wood table, two rush-bottomed chairs, a little brass brasier, in which, to warm the apartment during the winter evening, olive stones are burnt; my trunk, for which I sent, contained all the rest. I wished not to lose a single hour of that happy life which restored to me something like a family. That very night I slept in my new lodgings. I did not awake until I heard the joyous twittering of the swallows, which entered my chamber through a broken pane in the window, and the musical voice of Graziella, who was singing in the adjoining room in time with the cadenced movement of her turning-lathe.

NOTE XIII.

I opened the window which looked out on the small gardens of fishermen and washwomen, bounded by the rocks of Mount Posilipo and by the strand of *la Margellina.*

A few blocks of red sandstone had rolled into those gardens, and settled themselves close by the house. Several large fig-trees, growing from beneath and almost crushed by those rocks, folded them in their crooked white arms, and covered them with their large motionless leaves. You could only see, on this side of the house, in those gardens belonging to poor people, a few wells, above each of which swung a large wheel which was turned by an ass, to raise the water which passed through trenches and irrigated the fennel, the turnips, and the puny cabbages; women drying clothes on lines stretched from one lemon-tree to another; little children in their under-garments, playing or crying on the terraces of the two or three little white houses scattered about the gardens. Confined, low, and livid as was this view of the purlieus of a great city, it seemed delightful to me in comparison with the high house-fronts of the deeply sunken streets, and the noisy throngs in the quarter of the town which I had just left. I inhaled vegetable air, instead of the dust, fire, and smoke of that human atmosphere which I had lately breathed. I heard the braying of asses, the crow of the cock, the rustling of leaves, the alternate wail of the sea; instead of those rumblings of carriages, those piercing screams of the populace, and that incessant thunder of all the strident noises which give the ear no rest, and rob the mind of all quietude in the streets of large cities.

I could not tear myself from my couch, on which I voluptuously enjoyed that sunshine, those rural sounds, those flights of birds, that scarcely ruffled repose of the mind; and then, while I gazed upon the nakedness of the walls and the emptiness of the chamber, I inwardly rejoiced as I reflected that that poor house at least loved me, and that there are no carpets, no hangings, no silken curtains that are worth as much as a little affection. All the gold in the world cannot purchase one single pulsation of the heart, or one single beam of tenderness from the eyes of those who are indifferent to you.

These thoughts gently rocked and soothed me as I lay half

asleep; I felt myself reviving to health and peace. Beppino entered my chamber several times to see whether I was in want of any thing. He brought and placed on my bed some bread and grapes which I ate, throwing some of the grapes and crumbs of the bread to the swallows. It was near mid-day. When I arose, the sun's rays streamed full into my room with their gentle warmth of autumn. I agreed with the fisherman and his wife about the small sum which I should pay them each month, for the rent of my cell, and to enable them to make a slight increase in their domestic expenses. The amount was very trifling—these poor people thought it too great. It was easy to perceive that, far from seeking to profit by me, they were inwardly grieved that their poverty and the restricted frugality of their life would not permit them to offer me a hospitality of which they would have been much more proud had it cost me nothing. Two loaves of bread were bought, in addition to those which were purchased each morning for the family; a little boiled or fried fish was added to the dinner; a little milk food and some dried fruit for the evening meal; oil for my lamp; fuel for cold weather; that was all. A few copper *grani*, small coin in use amongst the populace of Naples, were sufficient for my expenses of each day. I have never better understood how independent happiness is of luxury, and how much more of it can be bought with the smallest piece of copper than with a purse of gold, when one knows how to find it where God has hid it.

NOTE XIV.

I lived in this manner during the last months of autumn and the first of winter. The brilliancy and serenity of those months in Naples make you confound them with their forerunners. Nothing interrupted the monotonous tranquillity of our existence. The old man and his grandson no longer ventured into the open sea, in consequence of the gales of wind so frequent at that season of the year. They continued to fish along the coast, and their fish, sold on *la marine* by the grandam, furnished ample means for their life without wants.

Meanwhile Graziella was perfecting herself in her art; she was also growing taller and handsomer in the easier and more sedentary life which her new occupation forced her to lead.

Her salary, which was brought to her every Sunday by her uncle, not only permitted her to keep her little brothers neater and better clothed, and to send them to school, but also to give her grandmother, and to purchase for herself, a few of the richer and more elegant articles peculiar to the women of their island: — handkerchiefs of red silk to hang from behind the head in long triangles down the back; shoes without heels, embroidered with silver spangles, which only cover the toes; jackets of silk, striped with black and green;—these jackets, laced on all the seams, hang open on the hips; they permit you to see the delicacy of the shape and the contour of the throat adorned with necklaces;—and finally large chased ear-rings made of gold, whose threads are interwoven with small pearls. The poorest women of the Grecian isles wear these articles of dress and ornament. No distress could make them part with them. In those climates where the appreciation of beauty is more vivid than beneath our skies, and where life is nought but love, adornment is not a luxury in the eyes of womankind. It is her principal and almost her only want.

NOTE XV.

When Graziella sallied forth from her chamber, on the Sabbath or on festival days, and came upon the terrace thus decked out, with a few red pomegranate flowers or some of the rosy buds of the laurel fastened in her black hair on the side of her head; when, hearkening to the sound of the bells in the neighboring chapel, she walked to and fro in front of my window, like a peacock basking in the sun on the roof; when she languishingly trailed her feet imprisoned in their bespangled slippers, gazing at them the while, and then raising her head with an undulation of the neck which was habitual to her, in order to make the ends of her silken handkerchief and her tresses float on her shoulder; when she perceived that I was gazing at her, and blushed as if she were ashamed of being so lovely, the new lustre of her beauty impressed me so deeply that I fancied I then saw her for the first time, and that my ordinary familiarity with her was transforming itself into a sort of timidity and bedazzlement.

But she sought so little to dazzle, and her natural instinct of personal adornment was so free from all pride and coquetry, that she hastened, so soon as the holy ceremonies were at an end, to strip off her rich ornaments, and resume her simple jacket of coarse green cloth, her dress of striped red and black calico, and her slippers with the white wooden heels, which sounded on the terrace, for the remainder of the day, like the noisy slippers of the female slaves in the East.

Whenever her young friends, of her own sex, failed to come for her, or her cousin did not accompany her to church, it was often I who escorted her thither, and waited for her, seated on the front steps. As the people issued from church at the end of the service, I listened with a sort of personal pride,—as if she had been my sister or my intended,—to the murmurs of admiration which her graceful features drew from her companions, and from the young mariners of the quays of *la Margellina*. But she heard nothing, and, seeing no one but me in the crowd, smiled to me from the topmost step, made her last sign of the cross with fingers wet with holy water and with eyes modestly downcast, descended the flight, at the foot of which I awaited her.

It was thus, on festival days, that I escorted her, morning and evening, to the churches, the sole and pious relaxation she had, or loved. On those days I took especial care to assimilate my dress to the costume of the young mariners of the island, in order that my presence should astonish no one, and that I might be taken for the brother or some relative of the young girl, whose attendant I was.

On other days she never went out. As to myself, I had gradually resumed my life of study and my solitary habits, which had only been interrupted by the grateful friendship of Graziella, and by my adoption into her family. I read the historians and poets of all countries. I sometimes wrote; I attempted to pour out, either in prose or in verse, at one time in Italian, at another in French, those first ebullitions of the soul which seem to weigh upon the heart until words have given them relief by expressing them.

It seems that speech is the only predestination of man, and that he was created to give birth to thoughts, as the tree was created to give birth to fruit. Man frets until he has brought forth that which works within him. His written word is as a mirror, of which he has need to know himself, and convince himself that he exists. Until he has seen himself in his works

he does not feel completely alive. The mind has its puberty as well as the body.

I was at that age which requires to increase and multiply itself by words. But, as is always the case, the instinct was greater in me than the strength. So soon as I had written, I was dissatisfied with my work, and cast it from me with disgust. How many shreds of my feelings and thoughts of the night, torn and scattered without regret, in the light of day, have not the winds and waves of the sea of Naples borne away and swallowed up in the morning!

NOTE XVI.

Sometimes Graziella, when she saw me closeted for a longer time and more silent than usual, would furtively enter my room to tear me from my obstinate readings, or from my occupations. She would noiselessly approach the back of my chair, raise herself on tiptoe to look over my shoulder, and gaze at what I was reading or writing, without understanding either; then, with a sudden movement, she would grasp my book, or snatch my pen from between my fingers, and take to her heels. I would pursue her to the terrace, and show a little anger; she would laugh. I would forgive her; but she would scold me seriously, as a mother might have done.

"What does this book say to your eyes for so long a time to-day?" would she murmur with half serious, half playful displeasure. "Will these black lines on this ugly old paper never have done speaking to you? Do you not know enough stories, like the one which made me weep so much at Procida, to tell us every Sunday and every evening in the year? And to whom do you write these long letters at night, which you scatter on the sea-breeze in the morning? Do you not know that you are injuring yourself, and that you are quite pale, and seem to be absent-minded, after you have written so long a time? Is it not much pleasanter to speak with the person who is now looking at you, than to converse for whole days with these words, or with these shadows which do not hear us? God! why have I not as much sense as these sheets of paper? I would speak to you all day, I would tell you all you wanted to know, I would; and you would have no need

thus to wear out your eyes, and burn away all the oil in your lamp."

Then she would hide my books and my pens. She would bring me my sailor's jacket and cap. She would force me to go out and divert myself.

I would obey, not without murmuring, but also not without loving her.

BOOK X.

NOTE I.

I WOULD take long walks through the city, on the quays, in the country; but these solitary walks were not mournful, as during the first days of my return to Naples. I enjoyed alone the sights of the town, the coast, the heavens, and the waters; but I enjoyed them with delight. The momentary feeling of my loneliness no longer overwhelmed me; it wrapt me within myself and concentrated all my powers of heart and mind. I knew that friendly eyes and thoughts followed me through those crowds or across those wastes, and that at my return I was waited for by hearts filled with my own image.

I was no longer like the bird whirling and crying around every strange nest, as the old woman had expressed it; I was like the bird which tries to take long flights from the branch which supports its own nest, but which knows the way back to it again. All my affection for my absent friend had flowed back upon Graziella. In that feeling there was something more lively, something sharper, something more tender than in the one which bound me to him. It seemed to me that the one was the consequence of habit and circumstance, but that the other had had its birth in my own heart, and that I had acquired it by my own choice.

It was not love—I neither felt its agitation, its jealousy, nor its impassioned prepossessions; it was a delightful repose of the heart, instead of being a sweet fever of the soul and senses. I had no thought of loving differently or of being loved more. I knew not whether she was a companion, a friend, a sister,

or something else to me; I merely knew that I was happy with her, and that she was happy with me.

I desired nothing more—I wished for no change. I had not attained that age when we inwardly analyze our feelings to give ourselves a vain definition of our happiness. I was content to be calm, attached, and happy, without knowing why or wherefore. Living in common, and interchanging our thoughts daily, increased our innocent and gentle familiarity, while she remained as pure in her freedom as I was calm in my indifference.

NOTE II.

During the five months that I had been one of the family, dwelling under the same roof, and, so to speak, constituting a part of her very thoughts, she had so completely accustomed herself to consider me as an inseparable portion of her heart, that she did not perceive, perhaps, how large a place I occupied in that heart. With me she had none of those fears, none of those reserves, none of those restraints which so often interpose themselves between a young girl and a young man, and which, as often, cause love to spring out of the very precautions which are taken to guard against it. She little suspected, and I myself hardly doubted, that her pure childish charms, which a few more days would cause to bloom in all the brilliancy of a precocious maturity, made her simple beauty a source of power for herself, of admiration for all, and of danger for me. She took no care either to hide or adorn that beauty in my presence. She thought no more of it than a sister thinks whether she is handsome or ugly in the presence of a brother. She never placed one flower more, or less, in her hair for my sake. She did not clothe her feet oftener on my account, when she dressed her little brothers at morn in the sunshine on the terrace, or helped her grandmother to sweep away the dead leaves which had fallen on the roof during the night. She entered my ever-open chamber at all hours, and seated herself as innocently as Beppino on the chair at the foot of my bed.

On rainy days I used to spend whole hours with her alone in the adjoining chamber, in which she slept with the little

children, and worked at her coral. I helped her at her trade, in which she gave me instructions, talking and joking the while. Less skilful, but stronger than she, I was more successful in thinning the pieces. We thus did double work, and in one day she earned the wages of two.

In the evening, on the contrary, when the children and the family were in bed, she became the pupil and I the preceptor. I taught her to read and write by making her spell the words in my books, and by holding her hand to make her form the letters. Her cousin could not come every day, and I took his place. Whether it was that the deformed and crippled youth did not inspire his cousin with sufficient regard and respect, notwithstanding his gentleness, his patience, and the gravity of his manners; or whether she herself had too many things to divert her attention during her lessons, she made much less progress with him than with me. One half of the evening of study would be spent in joking, laughing, and imitating the pedagogue. The poor young man was too deeply smitten with his pupil, and too timid in her presence to reprimand her. He complied with all her fancies in order that the beautiful eyebrows of the maiden should not wear a frown, and that her lips should not be pouted at him. It often happened that the hour appointed for reading was spent by him in peeling grains of coral, winding skeins of silk on the wood of the grandam's distaff, or mending the meshes of Beppo's net. Every thing suited him, provided that at parting Graziella gave him a complacent smile, and said *addio* in a tone of voice which meant *a revoir!**

NOTE III.

When the lesson was taken with me, on the contrary, it was serious. It would often be prolonged until sleep overpowered our eyes. It was easy to see, from her bowed head, her outstretched neck, and the attentive immobility of her attitude and countenance, that the poor child did her best to succeed.

* This locution has no concise equivalent in English. The literal meaning of *au revoir* is "till I see you again;" as used above, however, it may be Anglicised by the common phrase "let us see you soon again."—Tr.

She would lean her elbow on my shoulder to read in the book along whose page my finger followed the line and pointed out the word to be pronounced. When she wrote I held her fingers in my hand to give the proper direction to the pen.

If she made a mistake, I would scold her with an air of severity and displeasure; she would never answer, and only grow impatient with herself. Sometimes I saw her almost ready to weep; then I would speak in gentler tones, and encourage her to commence anew. If, on the contrary, she had read correctly and written well, it was easy to perceive that she herself sought her reward in my applause. She would turn towards me with blushing cheeks, and beams of joy on her brow and in her eyes, prouder of the pleasure which she gave me than of the little triumph of her success.

I would reward her by reading to her a few pages of *Paul and Virginia,* which she preferred to all other books; or some of the beautiful stanzas of *Tasso,* when he describes the rural life of the shepherds with whom Herminia dwelt, or when he sings the lamentations or the despair of the two lovers. The harmony of those verses made her weep and reflect a long time, even after I had ceased to read. Poetry has no echo more sonorous and long-sounding than the young heart in which love is about to bloom. It is like the foreshadowing of all the passions. At a later day, it is like their memory and their dirge. Thus it makes us weep at the two extreme periods of life—when young, tears of hope; when old, tears of regret.

NOTE IV.

The charming familiarities of these long and agreeable evenings, by the light of the lamp and in the pleasing warmth of the brasier filled with olive-stones, never awakened between us any other thoughts or any other intimacies than those of childhood. We were protected, I by my almost cold indifference; she, by her frankness and purity. We always parted as placidly as we had met, and a moment after those long interviews both slumbered under the same roof, at a short distance from one another, like two children who have played together during the evening, and who dream of nothing above their simple amusements. That tranquillity of those feelings which

are ignorant of their own existence, and which nourish themselves, would have lasted for years, had it not been for a circumstance which suddenly changed every thing, and revealed to us the nature of a friendship which, until then, had been sufficient to make us so happy.

NOTE V.

Cecho—that was the name of Graziella's cousin—came with increasing assiduity to spend the winter evenings with the family of the *marinaro.* Although the young girl gave him no signs of preference, and although he usually was the object of her jokes, and, to a certain extent, the butt of his cousin, he was so gentle, so patient, and so humble before her, that she could not help being affected by his complacency, and smiling upon him sometimes with kindness. That was enough for him. He was of the nature of those feeble but loving hearts who, feeling that they are deprived by nature of those qualities which excite love, are content to love without any return, and devote themselves like voluntary slaves to the service if not to the happiness of the woman to whom they give their hearts. Theirs are not the most noble, but they certainly are the most touching attachments. They are pitied, but they are admired. Loving to be loved, is the nature of man; but loving merely to love, is almost the nature of angels.

NOTE VI.

Under the most disagreeable features, there was something angelic in the love of poor Cecho. Hence, instead of harboring feelings of humiliation or jealousy, in consequence of the familiarity and preference with which I was treated by Graziella, before his very eyes, he loved me because she loved me. He did not exact the first or the only place in his cousin's affections, but the second or the last: any thing suited him. To gratify her for a moment, to obtain from her a complacent glance, a gracious sign or word, he would have searched all

over France for me, and have brought me back to the one who preferred me to him. I even believe that he would have hated me, had I grieved his cousin.

His pride, as well as his love, was bound up in her. It is possible that—inwardly cold, self-possessed, prudent, and methodical, such as God and his infirmity had made him—he instinctively calculated that my influence over the inclinations of his cousin would not be eternal; that some unforeseen but inevitable event would part us; that I was a stranger from a distant country, whose station in life and fortune were evidently incompatible with those of the daughter of a boatman of Procida; that some day or other the intimacy between his cousin and myself would be broken off as it had been formed; that she would then be left to him alone, forsaken, desolate; that her very despair would soften her heart, and give it to him crushed, but not severed. This character of comforter and friend was the only one to which he could lay the least claim. But his father had other views for him.

NOTE VII.

The father, knowing Checo's love for his niece, came to see her from time to time. Moved by her beauty and her modest and correct deportment, astonished by the rapid progress she made in the practice of her art, as well as in reading and writing; thinking, on the other hand, that nature's ill-treatment would not permit Cecho to aspire to any affections other than those of propriety and domestic life, he had resolved upon the union of his son and his niece. His fortune, which was already made, and quite respectable for a workman, permitted him to look upon his offer as a favor, to which Andrea, his wife, and the young girl herself would not even think of making the slightest opposition. Whether it was that he had mentioned his project to Cecho, or had hid his intentions from him in order to surprise him with his happiness, he determined to explain himself.

NOTE VIII.

On Christmas eve I returned somewhat later than usual, to take my place at the family supper-table. I perceived that there was some coldness and agitation in the evidently constrained features of Andrea and his wife. Fixing my eyes on Graziella, I saw that she had been weeping. Serenity and gayety were so habitual to her countenance that this unaccustomed expression of sorrow covered it as with a visible veil. It seemed as if the shadows of her thoughts and her heart had spread themselves over her face. I remained motionless and mute, neither daring to question those poor people, nor speak to Graziella, through fear that the mere sound of my voice would make the tears, which she appeared hardly able to restrain, gush forth anew.

Contrary to her habit, she did not look at me. She automatically raised her hand to her mouth and pretended to eat, to keep herself in countenance; but she could not. She threw the pieces of bread beneath the table. Before the silent repast was over she left the table, under the pretext of taking the children to bed; she dragged them to their chamber, shut herself in, without taking leave of any of us, and left me alone with her grandparents.

As soon as she went out, I asked the father and mother what was the cause of the seriousness of their thoughts, and the mournfulness of their child. Then they informed me that Cecho's father had paid them a visit in the course of the day; that he had asked for their grand-daughter's hand in marriage for his son; that it was a very great happiness and a high fortune for the family; that Cecho would have property; that Graziella, who was so good, would take her two little brothers with her, and rear them as her own children; that their own old age would be insured against want; that they had gratefully consented to that marriage; that they had spoken about it to Graziella; that her young girl's modesty and timidity would not permit her to make any reply; that her silence and tears were the natural effect of her surprise and emotion, but that all that would pass like a bee over a flower; finally, that it had been settled, between Cecho's father and they, that the betrothing should be celebrated after the Christmas holidays.

NOTE IX.

They continued to speak a long time after I had ceased to hear. I had never accounted to myself for my attachment to Graziella. I did not know how I loved her: whether my regard for her was the effect of pure intimacy or habit; whether it was friendship or love; or whether it consisted of all those sentiments united. But the idea of this sudden change of all those delightful habits of life and heart, which had established and, as it were, cemented themselves without our knowledge, between her and I; the thought that they were about to take her from me, and abruptly give her to another; that from my companion and my sister as she then was, she was about to become an indifferent stranger to me; that she would no longer be by my side; that I would no longer see her at all hours of the day, and hear her voice call my name; that I would no longer be able to gaze at that ray of caressing light and tenderness which shone in her eyes and always beamed on me, which cast a soothing brilliancy on my heart and reminded me of my mother and sisters; the void and the deep darkness which I fancied would suddenly encompass me there, on that spot, the day after her husband had borne her to another house; that chamber in which she would no longer sleep; my own, into which she would never again enter; that table at which I would no longer see her seated; that terrace on which I would no longer hear the sound of her naked feet, or the tones of her voice when I awoke in the morning; those churches to which I would never again escort her on the Sabbath; that boat in which her seat would be empty, and in which I would only have the winds and the waves to converse with; the thronging recollections of all those sweet habits of our past life, which crowded themselves upon my mind all at once, and which suddenly vanished, leaving me in an abyss of solitude and nothingness; all this made me feel for the first time what the society of that young girl was to me, and showed me too clearly that the feeling which bound me to her, whether friendship or love, was stronger than I deemed it; and that the charm of my wild life in Naples, hitherto unknown to myself, was neither the sea, nor the boat, nor my humble chamber in that house, nor the fisherman, nor his wife, nor Beppo, nor the children; but that it was one single being, and that with the departure of that being from the house, every thing

else would disappear at the same time. Deprived of her, there would be nothing left for me in the life I then led. I felt it: this feeling, which had hitherto been so confused, and which I had never confessed to myself, now struck me such a violent blow that my heart shuddered, and I experienced something of the infinitude of love through the infinitude of sorrow in which my heart suddenly felt itself ingulfed.

NOTE X.

I returned in silence to my chamber. I threw myself upon my bed without undressing. I tried to read, to write, to think, to divert myself by some arduous mental task which would overmaster my agitation. But all to no purpose. The inward commotion was so great that I could not collect two thoughts, and that even the prostration of my energies could not bring sleep to my relief. Never until then had the image of Graziella fixed itself so obstinately before my eyes and appeared to them so ravishing. I had enjoyed it as we enjoy those things which we see before us every day, but whose sweetness is not fully felt until we lose them. Her beauty itself had never been any thing to me until that day; I confounded the impression which it made on me with the effect of the friendship which I nourished towards her, and of that which her countenançe expressed for me. I did not know that there was so much admiration in my attachment; I had never suspected the least passion in her affection.

I did not clearly account to myself for all this, even in the long circumvolutions of my heart during the sleeplessness of that night. Every thing was confused in my grief as well as in my feelings. I was like a man stunned by a sudden blow, who does not clearly know yet where he suffers, but who suffers all over.

I left my bed before any noise was to be heard in the house. I know not what instinct prompted me to absent myself for some time, as if my presence at such a moment would disturb the sanctuary of that family whose fate was thus struggling before the eyes of a stranger.

I sallied forth, informing Beppo, as I went, that I would not return for several days. I walked at random in the direction

first chosen by my footsteps. I followed the long quays of Naples, the coast of Resina, of Portici, the base of Vesuvius. I took guides at the *Torre del Greco;* I slept on a stone at the door of the hermitage of *San Salvatore,* on the confines where inhabited nature ends and the region of fire commences. As the volcano had been for some time in ebullition, and at each shock vomited forth clouds of ashes and stones which we could hear, during the night, roll all the way down to the ravine of lava which runs below the hermitage, my guides refused to go any further with me. I ascended alone; with great difficulty I climbed the last cone, burying my hands and feet in a thick layer of burning ashes which crumbled away beneath my weight. The volcano rumbled and thundered at intervals. Calcined stones, still glowing, came down in showers around me and extinguished themselves in the ashes. Nothing checked me. I succeeded in reaching the outer edge of the crater. I seated myself. I saw the sun rise on the bay, the open country, and the dazzling town of Naples. I was cold and insensible to this spectacle, which so many travellers come thousands of leagues to admire. In this immense ocean of light, of seas, of coasts, and buildings gilded by the sun's beams, I only sought for one little white speck in the midst of the deep green of the trees, at the extremity of the hill of Posilipo, where I fancied I could see old Andrea's humble cot. In vain does man look and strive to take in all space at a glance; for him all nature is comprised in two or three perceptible points which form the *terminus* of his whole soul. Take from life the heart that loves you, what remains? It is the same with nature. Efface from it the site and the dwelling which your thoughts seek or your memory populates, it is nought but a brilliant void into which your glance buries itself without finding bottom, side, or resting-place. Is it surprising, then, that the sublime scenes of creation are contemplated by travellers with such a diversity of eyesight? The reason of this is, that every one brings with him the light through which he gazes. A cloud on the soul overshadows and darkens the earth more than a cloud on the horizon. The spectacle is in the spectator. I experienced this.

NOTE XI.

I looked at every thing, saw nothing. In vain did I descend like a madman to the very bottom of the crater, holding on to the spurs formed by the cold lava. In vain did I overleap the deep crevices whence arose the smoke and crawling flames which stifled and burned me. In vain did I contemplate the vast fields of sulphur and crystallized salt which looked like glaciers colored by those fiery breaths. I was as free from admiration as from fear. My soul was elsewhere; I strove in vain to recall it.

I returned in the evening to the hermitage. I discharged my guides, and picked my way back through the vineyards of Pompeii. I spent a whole day roaming through the desert streets of the ingulfed city. That tomb, opened after a lapse of two thousand years and again giving up to the sun its streets, its monuments, and its arts, made as little impression on me as Vesuvius. So many centuries had passed since God had swept away the soul of that sea of ashes, that that soul no longer spoke to my heart. I trod on that dust of human beings in the streets of what had once been their city, with as much indifference as on the heaps of empty shells cast by the sea upon its borders. Time is a great sea which is made to overflow, like the other sea, by our remains. We cannot weep over all. Let each man have his sorrow, each age its pity; that is quite enough.

After leaving Pompeii, I buried myself in the wooded gorges of the mountains of Castelamare and Sorrento. Here I lived several days, rambling from one village to another, and employing the goatherds to guide me to the most renowned spots in their mountains. They took me for a painter in search of prospects and views, because I made a few notes now and then in a little drawing-book which my friend had left with me. I was only an errant soul wandering here and there in the country to wear the days away. I lacked every thing. I was even missing to myself.

I was unable to continue any longer. After the Christmas holidays had passed, and with them that first day of the year, of which men have made an acknowledged festival, to seduce and mollify Time with joys and garlands, like the austere guest that the host wishes to conciliate; I made all haste to return to Naples. I re-entered the city at night, in doubt and

hesitation, wavering between my impatience to see Graziella again, and the dread of learning that I should never see her more. I stopped twenty times; I seated myself on the side of the boats as I approached *la Margellina.*

I met Beppo at a short distance from the house. When he saw me, an exclamation of joy escaped from his lips, and he threw his arms around my neck like a younger brother. He dragged me towards his boat, and told me what had taken place during my absence.

A great change had come over every thing in the house. Graziella had done nothing but weep since my departure. She no longer took her seat at table for the daily meals. She had ceased to work at her trade. She spent her days shut up in her chamber, refusing to answer when called; and her nights she passed in walking on the terrace. In the neighborhood it was said that she was crazy, or that she had become *innamorata.* But he knew that that was not true.

All the harm arose out of their desire to affiance her to Cecho contrary to her own wishes, said the boy. Beppino had seen and heard every thing. Every day Cecho's father came to the house to ask his grandfather and grandmother for an answer. The old people incessantly tormented Graziella to make her at last give her consent. She would not hearken to a word on the subject; she said she would sooner run away to Geneva. This expression, for the Catholics of Naples, is analogous to, "I would rather become a renegade." It is a threat worse than that of self-destruction—it is the eternal suicide of the soul.

Andrea and his wife, who adored Graziella, were almost driven to despair both by her resistance and the loss of their hopes of an establishment for her. They conjured her by their snowy locks. They spoke to her of their old age, their poverty, and the prospects of the two children. Then Graziella would soften. She would receive somewhat more favorably poor Cecho, who from time to time came and played with the children before his cousin's door. He always said, "How d'ye do?" and "Good-by!" to her through the door; but she very seldom gave him a single word in reply. He would go away dissatisfied, but resigned; and return on the following day just the same as before.

"My sister is very wrong," said Beppo. "Cecho loves her so much! and he is so good! She would be so very happy! Finally," added he, "this evening she allowed herself to be

prevailed upon by the prayers of grandfather and grandmother, and by Cecho's tears. She opened her door a little, and gave him her hand; he slipped a ring on her finger, and she promised that she would allow herself to be betrothed to-morrow. But who knows what new whim she may have in her head to-morrow? She, who was once so gentle and so light-hearted! My God! how she has changed! You would not know her! . . . ."

NOTE XII.

Beppino retired to rest in his boat. Informed by him of all that had taken place, I entered the house.

Andrea and his wife were alone on the *astrico*. They welcomed me with friendly warmth, and overwhelmed me with friendly reproaches for my prolonged absence. They related to me all their troubles and all their hopes with regard to Graziella.

"If you had been here," said Andrea to me, "you, whom she loves so dearly, and to whom she could never say no, you would have helped us greatly. How glad we are to see you again! To-morrow the betrothing takes place; you must be present; your presence has always brought us good fortune."

When I heard these words I felt a shudder crawl over every part of my body. Something told me that I would be the cause of their misfortune. I burned and I trembled to see Graziella again. I affected to speak in a loud tone to her grandparents, and to pass backwards and forwards in front of her door, like some one who does not wish to call, but who is anxious to be heard. She remained both deaf and dumb, and did not appear. I entered my chamber and went to bed. A certain tranquillity—such as is always produced by the cessation of doubt in the soul that was agitated, and the certainty of any thing, even of misery—at length came over my mind. I fell upon my couch like an inanimate and motionless mass. Lassitude of mind and body soon threw me into the midst of confused dreams, then into the total forgetfulness of sleep.

NOTE XIII.

I almost awoke two or three times during the night. It was one of those winter nights which are more rare and more dreadful in warm climates and on the borders of the sea, than elsewhere. The lightning flashed uninterruptedly through the cracks in my window-shutters, and played like the blinkings of an eye of fire on the walls of my room. The winds howled like packs of famished dogs. The dull blows of a heavy sea on the beach of *la Margellina* made the whole coast ring, as if it were being pelted with enormous rocks.

The breath of the wind made my door tremble and rattle. Two or three times I fancied that it opened and shut of its own accord, and that I heard smothered cries and human sobs mingled with the whistling and moaning of the tempest. I even thought, at one time, that I heard words and my name, pronounced by a voice which sounded like that of a person in distress, calling for help! I started up in my bed; I heard nothing more; I supposed that the tempest, the fever, and my dreams still haunted me with their illusions; I fell back and slumbered again.

The morning's cloudless sun had put the tempest to flight. I was awakened by real sobs, and by the screams of despair of the aged fisherman and his wife, who were venting their lamentations on the threshold of Graziella's chamber. The poor little thing had stolen away during the night. She had got up and kissed the children, motioning them to be silent. On her bed she had left her finest clothes, her ear-rings, her necklaces, and the small sum of money she possessed.

The father held in his hand a piece of paper, blotted with drops of water, which they had found fastened to the bedclothes with a pin. On this paper there were five or six lines of writing which he wildly implored me to read. I took it from his hand. It only contained these words, tremulously penned in the height of fever, and which I found some difficulty in reading:

"I have promised too much . . . . a voice tells me that it is more than I can perform . . . . I kiss your feet. Forgive me. I prefer to make myself a nun. Console *Cecho* and the *gentleman* . . . . I will pray to God for him and the little ones. Give them all that I have. Restore the ring to *Cecho* . . . "

When these lines were read the whole family again burst into tears. The little children, still in their night-clothes, hear-

ing that their sister had gone away forever, mingled their cries with the moans of the old people, and ran all over the house calling *Graziella!*

NOTE XIV.

The note fell from my hands. Stooping to pick it up, I saw on the floor, beneath the door of my own room, a full-blown pomegranate flower which I had admired in the young girl's hair on the preceding Sunday, and the little devotional medal which she always wore in her bosom, and which, during my illness, four months before, she had fastened to my bed-curtains. I no longer doubted that my door had really been opened and closed during the night; that the words and sobs, which I had fancied I had heard and had taken for the wailing of the winds, were the farewell words and sobs of the poor child. A dry place on the outer part of the threshold of my room, in the midst of the traces of the storm which were visible on all the other parts of the terrace, attested that the young girl had rested there during the tempest—that she had spent her last hour in tears and lamentations either lying or kneeling on that stone. I snatched up the pomegranate flower and the medal, and hid them in my breast.

The poor people, even in the midst of their own distress, were affected by the sight of my tears flowing with theirs. I did all I could to console them. It was agreed that if they found their daughter again they would never speak to her again about Cecho. Poor Cecho himself, in quest of whom Beppo had gone, was the first to offer himself up as a sacrifice to the peace of the family, and for the return of his cousin. Wretched as he was, it was easy to perceive that he was happy that his name had been mentioned with kindness in the note, and that he found a sort of consolation in the words of farewell which were the cause of his despair.

"She thought of me, at any rate," said he, wiping away his tears.

It was instantly covenanted between us that none of us would taste a moment's repose until after we had discovered the traces of the fugitive.

Andrea and Cecho set out in haste to make inquiries at the

innumerable convents in the city. Beppo and the grandam ran to the houses of all of those of Graziella's young female companions to whom they suspected she had confided her thoughts and the plan of her flight. I, being a stranger, took upon myself to scour the quays, the wharves of Naples, and the gates of the city, to question the guards, the captains of vessels, the boatmen, and ascertain whether any of them had seen the young *Procidana* leave the town that morning.

The morning was spent in bootless searches. We returned to the house silently and mournfully, to relate to one another the steps we had taken, and to consult anew. No one, except the children, had the courage to taste even a bit of bread. Andrea and his wife seated themselves dejectedly on the threshold of Graziella's room. Beppino and Cecho hopelessly resumed their wanderings through the streets and in the churches, which are opened at eve in Naples for the litanies and benedictions.

NOTE XV.

After they had gone, I sallied forth alone, and mournfully and unthinkingly took the road which leads to the grotto of Posilipo. I passed through the grotto; I went as far as the border of the sea which bathes the little isle of Nisida.

From the shore, my eyes turned towards Procida, which you can see from that spot rising like a tortoise-shell above the blue waves. My thoughts naturally followed the direction of my eyes, and fixed themselves on that isle, and turned to those pleasant days which I had there spent with Graziella. It was inspiration which guided me towards it. I remembered that, on the island, Graziella had a friend of about her own age, the daughter of a poor dweller in one of the neighboring cottages; that this young girl wore a peculiar dress unlike the costume worn by her companions. One day, when I was questioning her about the reason of this difference in her garments, she told me that she was a nun, although she lived in freedom with her parents, in a sort of intermediary state between cloisteral and secular life. She also showed me the chapel of her convent. There were several establishments of this kind on the island, as well as in Ischia and in the villages around Naples.

The thought struck me that Graziella's wish to devote herself to God had probably induced her to apply to this friend and ask her to introduce her into her convent. Ere I had taken time to reflect, I was already walking rapidly along the road to Pozzuoli, the town nearest Procida at which boats are to be found.

I reached Pozzuoli in less than an hour. I rushed to the port, to induce two boatmen to row me to Procida, despite the heavy sea and approaching darkness. I paid them double. They launched their bark. I seized a pair of oars to aid them. We doubled Cape Miseno with difficulty. Two hours afterwards, I landed on the island, and, trembling and panting for breath, I ascended alone, amid the darkness and the blasts of winter, the steps of the long flight which led to Andrea's cabin.

NOTE XVI.

"If Graziella is on the island," said I to myself, "that is the first place she has visited, moved by that natural instinct which leads the bird towards its nest, and the child towards its father's dwelling. Even if she is no longer there, she will have left some trace of her passage through the place. These tracks will perhaps lead me to her. If I neither find her nor any trace of her there, all hope is lost: the doors of some living sepulchre have forever closed upon her youth."

Agitated by this terrible doubt, I scaled the last flight of the stairs. I knew the situation of the cleft in the rock in which the old mother had hid the key of the house, at the time of our departure from the island. I pushed aside the ivy and buried my hand in the fissure. My fingers sought for the key, trembling lest they should feel the bit of cold iron which would have robbed me of all hope. . . . .

The key was not there. I smothered an exclamation of joy which arose to my lips, and entered the yard with noiseless steps. The door and the window-shutters were closed; a small ray of light which leaked through the crack beneath the door, and danced on the leaves of the fig-tree, however, indicated that there was a light burning within. Who but the fisherman's grand-daughter could have found the key, entered

the house, and lighted the lamp? All my doubts vanished: I felt certain that Graziella was at two paces' distance from me, and I fell upon my knees on the steps in front of the house, to thank the angel that had conducted me to her.

NOTE XVII.

No sound proceeded from the house. I pressed my ear against the door near the sill; I thought I heard the feeble sound of breathing and of sobs, coming from the back of the second room. I rattled the door gently, as if it had merely been shaken on its hinges by the wind, in order to attract Graziella's attention by degrees, and not to startle her by the sudden and unexpected noise of a human voice, and perhaps kill her by calling her. The breathing ceased. I then called Graziella in a low tone, and with the most tranquil and tender accent I could find in my heart. A feeble cry responded from the back part of the house.

I again called, conjuring her to open the door to her friend, her brother, who had come alone, in the gloom of night, through the tempest, guided by his good genius, to seek for her, find her, and tear her from her despair—to bring her the forgiveness of her family and his own pardon, and lead her back to duty, to happiness, to her poor old grandmother and her dear little brothers!

"God! it is he! I hear my name! it is his voice!" cried she in hollow tones.

I called her more tenderly, *Graziellina*, by that name of endearment which I sometimes gave her when we toyed together.

"Oh! yes, it is indeed he," said she. "I am not deceived; my God! it is he!"

I heard her rise from the dry leaves, which rustled beneath her at every movement she made, and advance a few steps to come and admit me; then fall back again, unable to move, either from weakness or emotion.

NOTE XVIII.

I no longer hesitated; I dashed my shoulder against the old door with all the force of my impatience and anxiety; the lock yielded to the pressure, and I rushed into the house.

The little lamp in front of the Madonna, which had been lighted by Graziella, shed its feeble rays around. I darted into the second room, where I had heard her speak and fall, and where I thought she had swooned. I was mistaken; she had not fainted. Her weakness alone had betrayed her efforts; she had fallen back upon the heap of dry furze which served her as a bed, where she now lay with her hands tightly clasped and her eyes fixed on me. These, animated by fever, distended by astonishment, made languid by love, sparkled like two fixed stars darting their beams from heaven and yet seeming to shine from the depths of waters.

Her head, which she sought to raise, fell back from weakness upon the leaves, and remained in a prostrate position as if severed from the trunk by the axe. With the exception of two bright roseate spots on her cheek-bones, her features were as pale as if their owner were at the point of death. Her beautiful skin was stained with the traces of tears on which the dust had settled. Her black garments were hardly distinguishable from the brown hue of the leaves on which she lay. Her naked feet, white as snow, overshot the heap of furze beneath her, and rested on the cold stone. Chills ran through all her limbs, and made her teeth chatter like castanets in the hands of a child. The red handkerchief which usually confined the long black tresses of her beautiful hair was loose, and hung like a veil over her brow down to her very eyelids. It was easy to see that she had used it to hide her face and her tears in darkness, as in the anticipated immobility of a shroud, and that she had only raised it when she heard the sound of my voice, and attempted to get up and come to admit me.

NOTE XIX.

I threw myself upon my knees beside the bed of furze; I took both her icy hands within my own; I raised them to my lips to warm them with my breath; a few tears trickled down

my cheeks and fell upon them. I knew, by the convulsive pressure of her fingers, that she felt this shower of the heart, and that she thanked me for it. I stripped off my sailor's wrapper. I threw it over her feet. I folded them in the woollen garment.

She submitted to all this, merely watching my movements the while with an expression of ecstatic delirium, but wholly unable to help herself by the least movement, like a child permitting itself to be swathed and turned in its cradle. I then cast two or three dry fagots on the hearth in the front room, to disseminate a little warmth in the air. I ignited them with the flame of the lamp, and returned to my post on the floor beside the couch of leaves.

"I feel well," said she to me, speaking in a tone of voice that was low, soft, even, and monotonous, as if her breast had completely lost its vibration and its accent at the same time, and as if her voice had only retained one single note. "I have in vain sought to hide it from myself—I have in vain sought to hide it forever from thee. I may die, but thou art the only one that I can ever love. They wished to betroth me to another; thou art the one to whom my soul is betrothed! I will never give myself to another on earth, for I have already secretly given myself to thee!—To thee on earth, or to God in heaven! that is the vow I made the first day I discovered that my heart was sick for thee!—I well know that I am only a poor girl, unworthy to touch thy feet even in thought; therefore have I never asked thee to love me. I never will ask thee if thou dost love me. But I—I love thee, I love thee, I love thee!" And she seemed to concentrate her whole soul in those three words. "Now, despise me, mock me, spurn me with thy feet! Laugh at me, if thou wilt, as a mad thing who fancies she is a queen in the midst of her tatters. Hold me up to the scorn of the whole world!—Yes, I will tell them with my own lips—'Yes, I love him! And had you been in my place, you would have done as I have,—you would have loved him or have died!'"

NOTE XX.

I had kept my eyes averted, not daring to fix them on her, lest my glance should say too much, or too little, in reply to

such wild delirium. At these words, however, I raised my head which had been resting on her hands, and tried to stammer an answer.

She placed one of her fingers on my lips.

"Let me tell thee all: now I am contented; my doubts are gone; God has disclosed himself. Listen: Yesterday, when I fled from the house after having spent the night in struggles and tears at thy door; when I arrived here in the midst of the tempest, I came with the belief that I should never more see thee—I came like a dead woman walking of her own accord to her grave. I was to have made myself a nun to-morrow, at the break of day. When I landed at night on the island, and knocked at the door of the convent, it was too late; the door was closed. They refused to open it for me. I came hither to spend the night, and kiss the walls of my father's house before I entered the walls of the house of God and the tomb of my heart. I had written to a friend to come for me to-morrow, and sent the note to her by a little boy.—I took the key. I lighted the lamp in front of the Madonna. I threw myself upon my knees, and made a wish—a last wish—a wish of hope even in the depths of despair.—For, if ever thou lovest, thou'lt know that there always is a last glimmering of light at the bottom of the soul, even when it is thought that all light had fled.—'Holy protectress,' said I, 'send me a sign of my vocation, to convince me that love does not deceive me, and that I really devote to God a life which should belong to Him alone! My last night amongst the living has already commenced. No one knows where it is spent. To-morrow, perhaps, search will be made for me, here, after I am gone. If the friend to whom I have sent word comes the first, that will be a sign that I must accomplish my design, and I will follow her to the convent forever.—But if *he* should appear before her! . . . . if *he* should come, guided by my protecting angel, to seek me, and arrest my steps on the very brink of my other life! . . . . . Oh! then, that would be a sign that you do not want me, and that I must return with him to love him all the rest of my days! Let him be the first to come!' added I. 'Perform this single miracle, if such is your will and God's decree. To obtain it, I will make you a gift—the only one that I, who have nothing, can make. Here are my tresses, my poor long tresses, which are loved by him, and which he has often playfully cast loose, to see them float in the wind on my

shoulders. Take them—I give them to you; I will cut them off with my own hands, to prove to you that I do not spare myself, and in order that my head may undergo, in advance, the operation that would deprive me of them to-morrow, and at the same time separate me from the world.'"

Saying this, she raised her left hand and removed the silken kerchief which covered her head, while with the other, she grasped the mass of her dissevered hair, which lay beside her on the leafy couch, and unrolled it before my eyes.

"The Madonna has performed the miracle," resumed she, in a louder tone of voice, and with an accent of extreme joy. "She has sent thee! I will follow thee wherever thou wilt. My tresses belong to her. My life is thine."

I threw myself upon the mutilated locks of her beauteous black hair, and they remained in my hands like a dead branch torn from the tree. I covered them with mute kisses, I pressed them against my heart, I deluged them with tears, as if they had been a portion of herself deprived of life, that I was burying in the earth. Then, turning towards her again, I saw her charming despoiled head, as if adorned and beautified by her very sacrifice, beam with joy and love in the midst of the black and uneven remains of her hair. It appeared to me like the mutilated statue of Youth, whose grace and beauty the very ravages of time heighten, by adding sorrow to admiration. This profanation of herself, this suicide of her beauty for the love of me, struck a blow at my heart which shook my whole being and made me prostrate myself at her feet. I then had a foreboding of what love is, and I mistook that foreboding for love itself!

NOTE XXI.

Alas! it was not real love, it was but its shadow in my heart. But I was too young and too ingenuous not to be deceived by it myself. I thought that I adored her as so much innocence, beauty, and love deserved to be adored by a lover. I told her so, with that accent of sincerity which emotion imparts; with that impassioned restraint which is imparted by solitude, darkness, despair, and tears. She believed it because she required that belief to live, and because she had enough passion in her own heart, to make up for its insufficiency in a thousand other hearts.

The whole night was thus spent in the confiding, but ingenuous and pure intercourse of two beings who innocently disclose their affection to one another, and who wish that night and silence may be eternal, in order that nothing indifferent to them may interpose itself between their lips and their hearts. Her piety and my timid reserve, the very tenderness of our souls, guarded us from all other dangers. The veil of our tears hung over us. There is nothing so far removed from sensuality as tender emotion. The abuse of such an intercourse would have been a profanation of two souls.

I held both her hands clasped within my own. I felt the glow of life return to them. I went and brought her some fresh water in the hollow of my hand to quench her thirst, or to wash her brow and cheeks. I fed the fire with a few dry branches; then I returned, and reseated myself on the stone beside the fagot of myrtle on which her head reposed, to hear and hear again, the delightful disclosures of her love; how it had grown in her breast without her knowledge, under the semblance of a sister's pure and sweet friendship; how she had at first felt fear, then taken heart; by what signs she had at length discovered that she loved me; how many marks of preference she had secretly given me without my knowledge; the day on which she thought she had betrayed herself; the day on which she fancied I returned her love; the hours, the gesture, the smiles, the words heedlessly uttered and eagerly remembered; the involuntary revelations or clouds of both our countenances, during those six months. Her memory reminded her of every thing; it had retained the imprint of every thing, as the dry grass on the mountains of the South, when ignited by the wind during the summer, retains the imprint of the fire's ravages on all the spots over which the flames have swept.

NOTE XXII.

To these confessions, she added those mysterious superstitions which give a meaning and a value to the most insignificant circumstance. The veils which covered her soul, so to speak, were thus raised by her, one by one, before my eyes. She showed me that soul, as she would have shown it to God, in all the nakedness of its candor, innocence, and boundless

trust. Once in a lifetime, only, does the soul know those moments in which it casts its whole self into another soul with that inexhaustible murmur from lips which are inadequate to its outpourings of love, and which at length stammer sounds that are inarticulate and confused, like the kisses of infants falling asleep.

I listened, sighed, and shuddered by turns with untiring delight. Although my too frivolous and youthful heart was neither sufficiently ripe nor sufficiently fruitful to produce, of itself, such burning and divine emotions; those emotions, showered upon it by another heart, produced such a novel and delightful sensation, that I fancied, as I felt them, they were my own. But no! I was ice, she was fire. I thought that I produced what I merely reflected. It mattered not; that reverberation from one to another seemed to belong to us both and to wrap us in the atmosphere of the same feeling.

NOTE XXIII.

Thus flew by this long winter night. And yet to her and to me it seemed not as long as the first sigh which reveals a lover's passion. When dawn appeared, it seemed to us that it came to interrupt the word that our lips had hardly commenced to utter.

And yet the sun had risen high above the horizon ere its rays stole between the closed shutters and made the light of the lamp grow pale. Just as I opened the door, I saw all the fisherman's family climbing the steps in hot haste.

The young nun of Procida, to whom Graziella had written and confessed her intention to enter the convent that morning, suspecting the cause of her despair, had sent her brother during the night to Naples, to warn Graziella's relatives of her determination. Informed in this manner of their child's hiding-place, they had set out, with joy and repentance in their hearts, to arrest her on the brink of a living tomb, and bring her back, free and forgiven, to her home.

The grandam fell upon her knees beside the couch of leaves, pushing forward with both her arms the two children, that she had brought with her to soften her grand-daughter's heart, and shielding herself from her reproaches behind their

bodies. The little ones, with screams and tears, threw themselves upon their sister's bosom. As Graziella raised herself to fondle her brothers and kiss her grandmother, the silken kerchief fell back and disclosed to view her head shorn of its covering. At the sight of this outrage on her beauty, whose meaning to them was but too plain, they shuddered. Their moans again rang through the house. The nun, who entered at that moment, quieted and consoled everybody; she picked up the locks which had been severed from Graziella's brow; she touched the image of the Virgin with them, as she wrapped them in a white silken handkerchief; then placed them in the extended apron of the fisherman's old wife.

"Keep them," said she, "to show them to her, now and then, in her joy and in her sorrow, and to remind her, when she gives herself to the one she loves, that the first-fruits of her heart should always belong to God, as the first-fruits of her beauty belong to Him in these tresses."

NOTE XXIV.

In the evening we all returned together to Naples. The zeal which I had shown in my searches for Graziella, and in my efforts to save her, greatly increased the affection of the old woman and the fisherman for me. No one suspected the nature of the interest I bore her, or of her attachment to me. Her repugnance to the proposed marriage was attributed wholly to the deformity of Cecho. They hoped that reflection and time would overcome that repugnance. They promised Graziella never again to press her to marry. Cecho, himself, entreated his father not to mention the subject again; his humility, his manner towards her, and his glances, seemed to implore his cousin's forgiveness for having been the cause of her grief. Tranquillity again entered the house.

NOTE XXV.

There was nothing now to cast a shade over the features of Graziella, or over her happiness, unless it was the thought

that that happiness would sooner or later be interrupted by my return to my native land. Whenever the name of France happened to be mentioned, the poor girl became pale, as if horrified by the sight of the phantom of death. One day, on entering my chamber, I found all my citizen's clothes torn to pieces and scattered about the floor.

"Forgive me!" said Graziella, falling upon her knees at my feet and turning her distorted features towards me. "I am the author of this *misfortune*. Oh! do not reprove me! All that reminds me that thou must one of these days throw off these sailor's garments pains me too much! It seems to me that thou'lt cast away thy present heart with these humble clothes, and assume a different one with thy fine attire of former times."

With the exception of these little storms, which only burst from the fiery clouds of her affection, and which were washed away by a few tears from our eyes, three months slipped away in an imaginary felicity which the first touch of reality was to destroy. Our Eden rested on a cloud.

And thus was it that I was first made acquainted with love:—by a tear in the eyes of a child.

NOTE XXVI.

One night, towards the end of May, I heard a violent knocking at the door. Every one was asleep. I went and opened. It was my friend V * * * *.

"I come for thee," said he to me. "Here is a letter from thy mother. Thou'lt not resist it. Horses are ordered for midnight. It is just eleven. Let us set out, or thou'lt never leave this place. It will kill thy mother. Thou knowest how thy family casts the responsibility of all thy faults on her. She has made so many sacrifices for thy sake, sacrifice thyself a moment for hers. I swear to thee that I will return and spend the winter and another long year with thee here. But thou must show thyself at home and perform this act of obedience to thy mother's commands."

I felt that I was lost.

"Wait for me here," said I.

I returned to my chamber, I hurriedly threw my clothes into

a portmanteau. I wrote to Graziella; I told her all that love could wring from a heart of twenty, all that reason could dictate to a son devoted to his mother. I swore to her, as sincerely as I swore to myself, that ere the fourth month had passed away, I would be by her side, and that I would hardly ever leave her again. I intrusted the uncertainty of our fate to Providence and Love. I left her my purse to relieve the wants of her aged grandparents during my absence. After closing the letter, I left my chamber on tiptoe. I cast myself upon my knees before her door. I kissed the stone, the wood; I slipped the note into her room beneath the door. I smothered the inward sob which almost smothered me.

My friend placed his hand under my arm, raised me from the floor, and tried to drag me away. At that very moment, Graziella, startled and alarmed, no doubt, by the unusual noise, opened her chamber-door. The moon shone brilliantly on the terrace. The poor child recognised my friend and saw my portmanteau, which a servant was carrying away on his shoulder. She stretched out her arms, sent forth a cry of terror, and fell senseless upon the terrace.

We sprang towards her. We bore her lifeless form back to her bed. All the family rushed to the spot. They threw water in her face. They called her in all the tones that were dearest to her. She returned to consciousness only at the sound of my voice.

"Thou seest she lives," whispered my friend in my ear; "the blow has fallen. A longer farewell would only be adding to its torture."

He tore the young girl's icy arms from about my neck, and dragged me out of the house. An hour afterwards, we were rolling in the silence and gloom of night along the road to Rome.

NOTE XXVII.

In the letter which I had written to Graziella, I had given her several directions. At Milan I found a first letter from her. She told me that she was well in body, but that her heart was sick; that she nevertheless placed her trust in my word, and would confidently expect me towards the month of November.

When I reached Lyons, I found another, which spoke with

still more serenity and security. It contained a few leaves of the carnation which grew in an earthen vase on the little breast-wall of the terrace, close by my chamber, and one of whose flowers she used to stick in her hair every Sunday. Was this to send me something that she had touched? Was it a tender reproach disguised beneath a symbol, and designed to tell me that she had sacrificed her tresses for my sake?

She said to me that she "had had the fever; that her heart was sore; but that she was getting better every day; that they had sent her, for a change of air, and for her entire recovery, to the house of one of her cousins, Cecho's sister—situated on the *Vomero*, a high and salubrious hill which overlooks Naples."

After this, I remained about five months without receiving any letters. My thoughts daily dwelt on Graziella. I was to set out again for Italy in the beginning of the following winter. Her sorrowful and charming image appeared to me there like a regret, and sometimes even like a gentle reproach. I was at that ungrateful period of life when frivolity and imitation make a young man feel a false shame in the best feelings of his nature; a cruel age, at which the most beauteous of God's gifts—pure love, ingenuous affection—fall into the dust, and are swept away in their bloom by the wind of the world. The false and ironical pride of my friends often struggled in my breast with the affection which lay hid at the bottom of my heart. I would not have dared to confess—without blushing and exposing myself to raillery—the name and station of the object of my regret and sadness. Graziella was not forgotten, but she was veiled in my life. That love which entranced my heart, humiliated my vanity. Her memory, which I only nourished in my heart when alone, pursued me almost like a remorse when I mingled with the world. How I blush now for having blushed then! and how much more precious was one of the joy-beams or one of the tear-drops of her chaste eyes, than all the glances, all the allurements, all the smiles for which I was about to sacrifice her image! Ah! man, when he is too young, cannot love! He knows not the value of any thing! He only knows what real happiness is after he has lost it!—There is more wild sap, more floating shade in the young trees of the forest; there is more fire in the old heart of the oak.

True love is the ripe fruit of life. At twenty, it is not known, it is imagined. In vegetable nature, when the fruit comes, the leaves fall; perhaps is this also the case in human nature. I have often thought so since I have found white hairs in my

head. I have reproached myself for not having then known the value of that flower of love. I was nought but vanity; and vanity is the most silly and most cruel vice of all, for it makes happiness blush! . . . .

NOTE XXVIII.

One night in the early part of November, on my return from a ball, some one handed me a note and a packet, which a traveller, coming from Naples, had brought to me from the post-house at Macon, where he had stopped to change horses. The stranger's note said, that, being intrusted by one of his friends—the superintendent of a coral manufactory at Naples—with an important message for me, he had acquitted himself of his charge as he passed through Macon; but that as the intelligence of which he was the bearer was sad and funereal, he would not ask to see me; he merely requested me to acknowledge the reception of the packet at Paris.

I opened the bundle with trembling hands. Beneath the first wrapper I found a last letter from Graziella, which only contained these words:

"The doctor says that I shall die in less than three days. I wish to say farewell to thee ere I lose all my strength. Oh! if I had thee near me, I would live! But it is God's will. I will soon speak to thee, and forever, from on high. Love my soul! It shall be with thee as long as thou livest. I leave thee my tresses, which were cut off for thy sake one night. Consecrate them to God in some chapel in thy own land, that something belonging to me may be near thee!"

NOTE XXIX.

I was overwhelmed, annihilated! I remained so, with her letter clasped in my hand, until daybreak. Then, and then only did I find courage to open the other envelope. It contained all her beautiful hair, just as it was on the night when she showed it to me in the cabin. To it were still attached

some of the leaves of the furze which had got entangled in it on that night. I complied with the order contained in her dying behest. From that day forward, a shadow of her death spread itself over my features and over my youth.

Twelve years afterwards I returned to Naples. I searched for traces. There was not one to be found, neither at *la Margellina* nor on the isle of Procida. The little house above the cliff had fallen to ruins. All that was left of it was a heap of gray stones above a storeroom, in which the goatherds sheltered their flocks when it rained. Time effaces quickly from the earth; but it never obliterates the traces of a first love from the heart that has passed over that earth.

Poor Graziella! Many days have flown by since those days. I have loved, I have been loved. Other rays of beauty and affection have illumined my gloomy path. Other souls have opened themselves for me, to reveal to me in the hearts of women the most mysterious treasures of beauty, sanctity, and purity that God ever animated on earth, to make us understand, foretaste, and desire heaven; but nothing has dimmed thy first apparition in my heart. The longer I have lived, the closer have I approached to thee in thought. Thy memory is like those lights of thy father's boat, which distance frees from all smoke, and which sparkle the brighter the farther they recede from us. I know not where slumber thy mortal remains, nor whether any one now mourns for thee in thy native land; but thy real sepulchre is in my soul. There every part of thee is gathered and entombed. Thy name never strikes my ear in vain. I love the language in which it is uttered. At the bottom of my heart there is always a warm tear which filters, drop by drop, and secretly falls upon thy memory, to refresh it and embalm it within me.

(1829.)

NOTE XXX.

One day, in the year 1830, having entered one of the churches of Paris in the evening, I saw them bring in the coffin of a young girl, covered with a white pall. This coffin reminded me of Graziella. I hid myself in the shadow of a pillar. I thought of Procida, and I wept for a long time.

My tears ceased to flow; but the clouds which had floated

through my brain during this mournfulness of a burial, did not disappear. I returned in silence to my apartment. I unfolded the remembrances which are retraced in this long Note, and at one single sitting, and with streaming eyes, I wrote the verses entitled "The First Regret." It is the note, weakened by twenty years' distance, of a feeling which caused the first spring to gush from my heart. But in it you can yet discover the emotion of a deep-set fibre which has been wounded, and which will never completely heal.

Here are those stanzas, the balm of a wound, the dew of a heart, the perfume of a sepulchral flower. They only lacked the name of Graziella. I would frame it in them in a verse, if a crystal could be found in this nether world sufficiently pure to contain that tear, that memory, that name.

THE FIRST REGRET.

Beside Sorrento's sounding beach, on which her murm'ring seas
Their blue waves roll 'mid foam and spray beneath the orange-trees,
There stands above the lonely path, the perfumed hedge close by,
A narrow, unobtrusive stone, on which the stranger's eye
But seldom rests.

There the gillyflower hides, beneath its tender spray,
A name which echo's babbling voice was never known to say!
And yet, at times, the trav'ler stops beside that stone, and reads
The age and date upon its face, half hid by clust'ring weeds;
And says, while pity's mists arise to dim his searching eye—
"Sixteen! only sixteen was she! that's very young to die!'

But, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Let winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise!
Come back, my thoughts, come back to me—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

And says, "Only sixteen was she!"—Yes, sixteen years she'd known!
And that sweet age on lovelier brow than hers had never shone!
And never had the brilliant glow of that shore's burning rays
Reflected been in eyes more bright, in more love-speaking gaze!
I, alone, can see her now,—as she by thought was shrined
Within the soul where nothing dies,—existing in my mind:
Living! yes, as full of life as when with eyes on mine—
(While we prolong'd our early talk on God's own boundless brine
Her tresses loose upon the wind, returning its embrace,—
The sluggish sail o'ershadowing her young and beaming face)—

She nearken'd to the burden of the fisherman's sweet song,
Inhaled the freshness of the breeze which skimm'd the wave along,
And show'd me with her graceful hand, the lustrous orb, full-blown,
Which like a flower of night delights young Morning on his throne;
And pointed at the silvery foam, and said to me, "Oh! why
Does every thing in me now shine as shine the sea and sky?
Never had these fields of blue so thickly strewn with fires,
Never had these golden sands on which the wave expires,
These mountains with their trembling peaks that shoot up in the sky,
These gulfs o'ertopp'd by deep, dark woods, through which the breezes sigh,
These lights that dance along the coast, these songs upon the seas,
Never had they fill'd my soul with such vague ecstasies!
Why is it I have never dream'd as I now dream to-night?
Within my heart has some new star just risen into light?
—And tell me, son of morning, say, hast ever seen a night,
Without me, in thy native land, which seem'd so dazzling bright?"[1]
—Then, turning to her mother old, who rode with us the deep,
She laid her head upon her lap, and calmly courted sleep.

But, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Let winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise!
Come back, my thoughts, come back to me!—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

What candor nestled on her lip! how pure her eye and bright!
And how that eye beam'd on mine own with streams of radiant light!
Not more transparent, limpid, smooth, in its deep, death-like sleep,
Lies Numico, the beauteous lake o'er which the winds ne'er sweep!
The thoughts which in her soul had birth, by others' eyes were seen
Ere they to her own self were known; and innocence's sheen,—
Which glisten'd in her downcast orbs,—their lids could never hide;
Her brow had never felt the mark of care's corroding tide;
Within her, all was playfulness; that youthful, joyous smile—
Which after-years make sad and drear, e'en when it beams awhile—
Aye bent her full, half-parted lips, like heaven's own bright bow!
No cloud o'er her entrancing face its dismal shade could throw;
Her careless step, free, unrestrain'd, aye rock'd, or rather sway'd
Her body, like the heaving waves on which the day-beams play'd,
Or bore it fleetly when she ran. Her voice's silvery tone—
The echo of a childish soul, which guile had never known,
The music of that spotless soul, which knew but how to sing—
Rejoiced the very sprites of air that raised it on their wing!

Bnt, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Lot winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise!

Come back, my thoughts, come back to me!—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

And like the ray which enters first, at morn, when eyelids part,
My image was the first that graved itself upon her heart;
No other sight thenceforward would her melting eye approve;
The moment that her heart was given, the universe was love!
With her own life she mingled mine, and in my single soul
Saw all she wished to see; I was a part, perhaps the whole,
For her, of that enchanting world which shone before her eyes—
Her sum of earthly happiness—her hopes beyond the skies!
She heeded not Time's rapid flight, no note of distance took,
The passing hour alone absorb'd life's every thought and look;
Ere I had come, that life had been from all remembrance free;
But when I came, one hour with me was all futurity!—
She gave herself completely up to Nature's smiles, so fair!
Which beam'd serenely on us both,—to pure and earnest prayer,
Which at her fav'rite altar's foot, with heart by joy subdued,
She breathed amid the flowers sweet her own fair hand had strew'd:
And that soft hand would oft lead me unto her temple's door,
Where I, like any ductile child, would bow me and implore,
While she in whisper'd tones would say—"Pray thou to God with me!
For heaven itself seems to my heart a myst'ry without thee!"

But, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Let winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise!
Come back, my thoughts, come back to me!—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

Behold the basin clear and smooth made by a living spring!
How like a lake its waters lave their borders' narrow ring!
Its surface blue protection finds from every rising breeze,
And from the ray that in it would a burning thirst appease!
The swan that swims so gracefully upon the limpid sheet,
And buries 'neath its surface clear a neck that ripples greet,
Adorns the liquid mirror bright, mars not its spotless sheen,
While sailing 'midst the spangles strewn by twinkling stars at e'en
But if he takes a sudden flight in quest of other springs,
And beats the trembling, startled pool with both his humid wings,
The heavens' bright reflection fades beneath the dark'ning wave,
And feathers fall in flakes to dim the lustre they ne'er gave—
As if some sanguinary bird, the foe of all his race,
Had struck him dead while in the air, and cast on earth the trace;
And now the surface of that lake, erewhile so clear and blue,
Is nought but one deep, thick'ning surge of dark and muddy hue!

E'en thus, when I departed, all within that soul was stirr'd;
Its trembling, dying light went out, and, like the spoken word,
Sped back to heaven, on seraph's wings, but never to return.
She waited not till other flames should kindle there and burn;
She linger'd not 'twixt doubt and hope; no struggle did she make
To snatch from sorrow's greedy grasp the life it came to take;
One draught was all she took to drain grief's bitter, fatal cup;—
In her first tear her gentle heart was drown'd and swallow'd up
And, like the bird—less pure than she, less beautiful, less bright,—
Which folds its head beneath its wing to slumber through the night,
She wrapp'd herself in those drear folds despair is wont to weave,
And fell asleep—but long, too long before life's final eve!

But, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Let winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise
Come back, my thoughts, come back to me!—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

Full fifteen years has she thus slept upon her bed of clay,
And nothing now weeps o'er the spot where she was hid away;
Forgetfulness, that second shroud in which we wrap the dead,
Has thrown its mantle o'er the path which to her grave once led;
No living thing e'er visits now that poor neglected stone,
None think of it, none pray o'er it! . . . . . except my thoughts alone,
When, striving hard to stem the tide of life's swift-coursing stream,
I ask my heart to show me those whose orbs no longer beam;
And when, with eyes reviewing loved memorials of the dead,
I mourn the loss of all those stars which from my sky have fled!
She was the first, but her soft light yet shines for me above,
And on my heart still casts a ray of piety and love!

But, oh! my thoughts, why drag me back to scenes of bygone days?
Let winds their dismal wail ring out—let waves their murmurs raise!
Come back, my thoughts, come back to me!—O mournful thoughts, return!
Come back, and let me dream again—not shed the drops that burn!

A bush by thorns defended, and in pallid verdure dress'd,
Is all that Nature's hand has raised to mark her place of rest;
Batter'd by the winds from sea, by sunbeams burnt and dried,
Like sad regrets deep-rooted in a heart by sorrow tried,
It lives, but casts no grateful shade upon the fost'ring stone;
Its leaves are whiten'd by the dust which from the path is blown;
Its branches crawl along the earth, untrammell'd and unpropp'd,
Where they by goats are soon espied, and pounced upon and cropp'd;
When spring-time comes, one single flower, like flake of spotless snow,
Adorns it for a day or two; but soon the breezes blow,

To tear it piecemeal from its stalk, ere fragrance it has shed,—
Like life, ere it has o'er the heart its charms and pleasures spread!
A bird of love and mournfulness sits on the bending stem,
And in its sweetest, purest tones, sings her sad requiem!
Oh! say, fair flow'r, that thus in life hast found thy early doom,
Say, is there not another land where all again must bloom?

Turn back, my thoughts, turn back, I say! to scenes of bygone days—
Your sad memorials of the past aid me my sighs to raise!
Go whither goes my soul, O thoughts! with rapid wing, pray, go!
My heart is full, ay, very full—my tears have need to flow!

Thus did I expiate by these written tears the cruelty and ingratitude of my heart of nineteen. I have never been able to reperuse these verses without adoring that youthful image which the transparent and plaintive waves of the gulf of Naples will roll eternally before my eyes . . . . and without detesting myself! But souls forgive on high. Hers has forgiven me. Forgive me also, you!—I have wept.

BOOK XI.

NOTE I.

In 1814, I entered the military household of King Louis XVIII., like all the young men of my age whose families were attached by remembrance to the old monarchy. I was a member of the corps of that guard which was to march against Bonaparte at Nevers, then at Fontainebleau, and finally defend Paris with the National Guard, and the young men of the schools, who had enrolled themselves spontaneously, and out of mere enthusiasm for liberty, against the invasion of the soldiers of the isle of Elba. For the last fifteen years History has been compelled into most shameful contortions on the subject of the so-called triumphal return of Bonaparte, amid the applause of France. It is a conventional falsehood, which, for that reason, is none the less gross.

The truth is, that France, astonished and in consternation, was conquered by one of the reminiscences of glory which intimidated the nation; and there is nothing less true than that

she was influenced to rise by her love and fanaticism for the Empire. That fanaticism, at that period, only existed among the troops; and what is more, only in the subaltern ranks of the army. France was tired of those wars for a single man; in Louis XVIII. she had hailed, not the king of the counter-revolution, but the king of a liberal constitution. All the interrupted movement of the Revolution of 1789 recommenced for us after the downfall of the Empire.

All France—thinking France, not bawling France—was fully convinced that Bonaparte's return brought back with it tyranny and military sway. These it dreaded. The 20th of March was an armed conspiracy, not a national movement. The first feeling of the people was to rebel against the audacity of that man who oppressed them with the weight of a hero. Had there not been an organized army in France to rally beneath its Emperor's eagles, the Emperor would never have reached Paris. The nation was carried away by the army; it forgot Liberty for the sake of one man; this is the truth. That man was a great general; that man had been its chief fifteen years; in its eyes that man was Glory and the Empire; this is its extenuation, if any thing like extenuation can be offered for defection to Liberty. This was the first time in my life that I felt in my soul a complete mistrust in man. In the space of eight days I saw one France that was ready to rise like a single man against Bonaparte, and another France that was prostrate at the feet of Bonaparte. I knew full well that the submission was not voluntary and the genuflection not sincere; I saw that the greatest people are not always heroical, and that nations sometimes pass under the yoke. From that day forward I despaired of the omnipotence of opinion, and believed *plus quod decet* in the power of bayonets. That was my first political disenchantment. The 20th of March and the pliancy of a nation bending before a few regiments, remained like a crushing weight on my heart. History has disguised that subjection under a feigned enthusiasm. But there is a History which is truer than that which is written to flatter the age in which the historian lives—and it will speak a language different from that of the incense-bearers of the Great Nation and the Great Soldier. The Empire awaits its Tacitus, and Liberty will be avenged. Meanwhile, we must take no heed of the falsehoods of that unscrupulous History, of those Taciti of the camp and barracks, who follow the army as sycophants in former times followed the court; who deprave

the judgment of the people by always justifying success, by always worshipping the sword, and who have such a thirst for servility in their souls, that, as they can no longer adore the tyrant, they at least adore the memory of tyranny! . . . . .

NOTE II.

We quitted Paris on the day preceding the entrance of Bonaparte into that city. We left the capital in great commotion. In all the streets, on all the boulevards, in all the faubourgs, in all the villages through which we passed, the people crowded around us to overwhelm us with their blessings and their prayers. Citizens came from their houses, and, with tears in their eyes, offered us bread and wine. They pressed our hands within their own; they showered maledictions upon the heads of the pretorians who came to overthrow the institutions and destroy the peace which had hardly been re-established. This is what I heard and saw from the Place Louis XV., whence we took our departure, to the Belgian frontier.

And they who spake and acted thus were not merely the royalists, the partisans of the house of Bourbon, but especially the liberals, the friends of the Revolution and of Liberty.

We marched thus, in the midst of this concert of imprecations and tears, as far as Bethune, a small fortified town on our northern frontiers, two leagues distant from Belgium. We were under the command of Marshal Marmont. The Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry, his son, marched with us. The king had separated from us at Arras, and had taken the route to Lisle. He tarried but a few hours at Lisle, where the disposition of the garrison threatened his safety. He took refuge in Belgium.

At this intelligence, the Count d'Artois, Marshal Marmont, and the mounted grenadiers of the Royal Guard left Bethune to follow the king out of France. A few companies of body-guards, light-horsemen and musketeers remained in the town to defend it. In the evening we were assembled on the *place d'armes* (parade ground); a proclamation was read to us, in which the princes thanked us for our fidelity; they bade us farewell, and told us that, liberated thenceforward from our

oath to them, we were free to return to our homes or to follow the king into a strange land.

During the perusal of this proclamation, groups were formed on all sides. We deliberated on the most honorable and most patriotic course to follow, forsaken as we were. Some thought it best to follow the king, others were in favor of returning to the ranks of the people, and there awaiting an opportunity to do fruitful service to our cause, which was betrayed by fortune, but not by right. The most impassioned and most numerous voices were for carrying our standard into Belgium, and attaching our fortune to the steps of the king we had sworn to defend. Speeches were made with that animation and with that martial eloquence which unfurls banners, and in the outbursts of which, words are accompanied by gestures and the clangor of swords. That was the first time that I addressed the multitude. Loved by many of my comrades, and honored, notwithstanding my extreme youth, with a certain degree of authority amongst them, I yielded to the solicitations of some of my friends; I mounted the wheel-nave of one of the wagons in which our arms were stowed, and made a reply to the musketeer, who had deeply and brilliantly moved the minds of his hearers, by speaking in favor of emigration.

I was as hostile to Bonaparte and as devoted to a liberal restoration as any one in the army; but I came from a race of men who had never deserted their country, and who believed as firmly in the rights of our native land, as our ancestors believed in the rights of the throne. My father and his brothers belonged to that generation of French nobles who lived in the provinces and in the camps, away from the courts, hating abuses of power, despising corruption,—the friends of Mirabeau and the first constitutionalists, the enemies of the crimes of the Revolution, the constant and moderate partisans of its real principles. None of them had emigrated. *Coblentz* was repugnant to them as a folly and a fault. They had accepted the part of victims to the Revolution in preference to the part of auxiliaries to the enemies of their country. I had been nourished with these ideas; they had infused themselves into my veins; politics are in the blood.

I expressed these thoughts with frankness and energy. In support of them I made a few bold reflections of a nature to make a deep impression on wavering minds.

I said that the cause of liberty and the cause of the Bourbons had been happily united in France, since Louis XVIII. had

given our country a representative government; that our strength depended on our being closely associated with the liberals and the republicans; that the same hatred of Bonaparte animated us all; that he himself, the usurper of all the rights of the people, could not rule thenceforward without giving the nation the shadow of a liberal constitution; that that constitution would necessarily include freedom of speech and the freedom of the press; that if the united republicans and royalists were to employ the weapons of public opinion against Bonaparte, his reign would be short and his downfall final; but that if the royalists emigrated and surrendered the republicans to the army, all resistance to tyranny would soon be drowned in the blood of the liberals, or smothered in the dungeons of the state prisons; that the friends of liberty were the enemies of emigration; that, inclined to-day to form an alliance with us on the ground of constitutional freedom and of a restoration of '89, they would separate from us the moment they saw us on a foreign land, and under any other flag than that of the independence of our country; that, hence, our duty to our country and our families, as well as sound policy and useful fidelity, commanded us not to follow the king out of the land; that the steps that we had thus far taken, to follow him, were the steps of discipline and loyalty which would leave nought but traces of honor in our lives, but that one step more would denationalize us and leave us nought but regret, and at some future day, perhaps, remorse; that, consequently, I would not cross the frontier, and that, without any wish to blame the contrary opinion of some of my companions, I counselled those who thought as I did to range themselves on my side.

These words made a deep impression, and the majority declared against emigration. Those who persisted in following the princes, mounted their horses and left the town. We shut ourselves up in Bethune, which was already surrounded by the troops which the Emperor had sent from Paris to observe the king's retreat. Reduced—by the absence of officers and the lack of command—to self-organization, we posted small detachments near the principal gates, and had sentries patrolling the ramparts day and night. I slept three days and three nights in the guard-house at the gate of Lisle, with an excellent friend named Vaugelas, who has since distinguished himself in the magistracy and in politics. On the fourth day we capitulated. After having been first discharged by the

king, we were again dismissed by the Bonapartist general who entered Bethune. We were left free to return individually to our families. Paris was the only place we were forbidden to enter.

I entered it nevertheless, under favor of a citizen's coat and a cabriolet which were sent to me at Saint Denis. I spent a few days in the capital, to study the state of the public mind, and to judge with my own eyes of the feelings of the young men and the people. I saw the Emperor pass one review on the Carrousel. It needed the prism of glory and the illusion of fanaticism to see in his person, at that period, the ideal of intellectual beauty and innate royalty with which marble and bronze have since flattered his image in order to make us adore it. His head was buried between his shoulders. His large and livid cheeks overhung the tight collar of his uniform. His complexion, yellow as the orange, seemed to exude the sweat of care. His forehead was wrinkled by the anxieties of the moment. His deep and restless eye wandered over the assembled troops and people. His handsome, well-shaped mouth, smiled automatically on the crowd, while his thoughts were evidently elsewhere. A certain air of doubt and hesitation was perceptible in all his movements. It was easy to see that the ground was not firm beneath his feet, and that he was groping about on the throne with his fortune. He was not certain whether his entry into Paris was a triumph or a snare prepared by his guiding-star. The troops, as they filed off in front of him, cried *Vive l'Empereur!* with the smothered accent of despair. The people of the faubourgs sent forth the same clamors with a tone that was more menacing than enthusiastic. Lookers-on either held their tongues, or interchanged a few words in whispers, and significant glances. It was evident that hatred wished and watched for his downfall in the midst of the display of his strength and his triumph. The police interrogated the countenances of all. Cries of liberty arose with cries of adulation and servility. Every thing in the scene reminded you more of one of the Emperors and a scene of the Grecian Empire than the hero of Egypt and the Consulate. It was the 18th of Brumaire taking its revenge.

I left Paris, that great and heroical corrupter of the Revolution, with all my energy and with the presentiment of future freedom.

NOTE III.

After my return home, the Imperial decrees for new levies of troops succeeded one another, and came to disturb my father's tranquillity. It was necessary either to enter the ranks of the young soldiers who were transferable to the army, or buy a man to act as a substitute in the service of the Empire. I would neither do one thing nor the other. I declared to my father that I would rather be shot by Bonaparte's orders than shed a drop of my blood or of another person's blood, for the service and support of what I called tyranny. I felt that this determination, which was loudly and resolutely proclaimed by the son, might jeopard the safety of the parent, were he to be held responsible for it, and I resolved to leave the country.

Switzerland was neutral. I took a few louis from my mother's purse, and, without any passport, turned my steps one night towards the Alps.

NOTE IV.

My grandfather had formerly owned large possessions in Franche Comté, between St. Claude and the confines of the canton of Vaud. These estates no longer belonged to us, but they had been bought by old agents of the family to whom my name would not be unknown. I journeyed without hinderance, as far as their dwelling, at the foot of the forests of pines which grow on the edge of both the territories of Switzerland and France. They welcomed me as the grandson of the former owner of those forests. They secreted me a few days in their house. I threw aside my ordinary dress. From one of the young men of the house, I borrowed a linen jacket similar to those worn by the peasants of the country; and, with a gun on my shoulder, I passed into Switzerland, through the thickest of the sentries and custom-house officers, who took me for some hunter living in the neighborhood. When I reached the summit of Saint Cergue, whence the eye takes in at a glance Lake Geneva and the belt of gigantic mountains which surrounds it, I enthusiastically kissed that land of freedom. I remembered that, four years before, when return-

ing from Milan to Lausanne, the same feeling of enthusiasm had been awakened in my bosom by the sight of a stone escutcheon, standing in the road between Villeneuve and Vevay, on which were graven these magical words—*Liberty, Equality!*

An old man of Lausanne, who was riding in the same vehicle, observing the emotion awakened in my soul by this symbol of republican institutions in the midst of the subjection of the Empire, would have me to stop at his house, and, although I was an utter stranger, kept me in his family several days.

Men know one another by their feelings as well as by their names. Generous ideas are ties of relationship between strangers. Liberty has its brotherhood as well as consanguinity.

NOTE V.

I neither had letters of credit, introduction, or recommendation, nor any other papers that could procure me access into one single family in Switzerland. The federal police might take me for one of the numerous spies that the Emperor sent into the cantons to turn public opinion in his favor and revolutionize the country against the feeble remains of the aristocracy of Berne. It was requisite to grope about for a family that would be answerable for me. At Saint Cergue, I entered the house of one of the guides who led strangers from France into Switzerland through the mountain-paths. In the course of the conversation, after supper, I inquired of this man the names of the principal persons with whose families he was acquainted in the pays de Vaud, and to whom he most frequently conducted strangers. He mentioned Madam de Staël, whose numerous and illustrious friends often took shelter beneath her roof during their journeys backwards and forwards across the frontier. It is known that *Coppet* was the asylum of all the friends of Liberty whose only protection for ten years had been the genius of a woman. He also mentioned the name of the Baron de Vincy, a Swiss officer who had formerly been in the French service. He showed me his Chateau, which was within a few leagues of the guide's dwelling, at the foot of the mountains. He pointed out the road which led to it, and I determined to introduce myself to its owner.

NOTE VI.

At break of day, on the following morning, I descended towards the lake in the direction of Nyons, or Neus. It was in the month of May; the heavens were cloudless, and the resplendent waters of the lake were dotted here and there with white sails. On their surface, towards Meilleraie, lay the shadows of the mountains, with their crags, their forests, and their snows. These Alpine sights, on which my eyes had only cursorily glanced four years before, now intoxicated me. I paused at every turn in the descent; I seated myself alongside of every spring, and in the shade of the most beautiful chestnut-trees, to imbody, so to speak, that splendid nature through my eyes. On the other hand, I involuntarily hesitated to present myself at the Chateau de Vincy. I was not displeased to delay the execution of an act that was embarrassing to me.

NOTE VII.

I at length arrived at the gate of the Chateau; it was past mid-day. I asked, with a timidity that was poorly disguised under feigned assurance, whether the Baron de Vincy was at home. I received an affirmative answer, and was ushered in. Notwithstanding my peasant's jacket, my face contrasted so strongly with my costume, that M. de Vincy requested me to be seated, and politely inquired the object of my visit. I told it to him: he listened with obliging attention, made a few inquiries to satisfy himself that I was not an adventurer, seemed contented with their result, wrote a letter to a magistrate in Berne, and handed it to me. I thanked him with warm expressions of gratitude and walked away.

Just as I was about to take leave of him on the landing of the court-yard steps, two ladies, who were descending the stairs, appeared in the vestibule.

One of these ladies was the Baroness de Vincy. She was a woman about forty years of age, tall in stature, majestic in her port, with a gentle and placid countenance, o'erclouded by a melancholy expression, like that which darkens the features of antique Niobes. The other was a young girl of fifteen or

sixteen, much smaller than her mother, and whose thoughtful lineaments bespoke a northern plant growing in the shade of a cold climate, and o'ershadowed perhaps by some domestic sorrow. The two ladies paused to listen to the last words of my conversation with M. de Vincy. They gazed at me with mingled earnestness and benignity, and remained some time on the landing, watching me as I walked away. There was something of indecision and regret in their attitude.

I had already gone some distance, and had reached the streets of the village, when a servant came running after me, and requested me, in the name of Madam de Vincy, to turn back. I followed him. I found the family, consisting of M. de Vincy, his wife, and a son ten or twelve years of age, waiting for me on the landing.

"We feel a sincere regret," said Madam de Vincy to me, in a touching and altogether maternal tone of voice; "we fear that, being a stranger in our mountains, and fatigued by a long journey on foot, you will not find in the village any inn where you will be able to refresh and rest yourself. We pray you to make our house your halting-place, and to be so good as to dine with us. We are on our way to table. You will have all the time requisite to reach Roll during the afternoon."

I refused for some time, and tried to excuse myself because of my attire, which made me unfit to sit at their board. They insisted, and I at length yielded.

During the plain and frugal repast, which took place in a hall where every thing attested the departed splendor of a house fallen from its fortunes, M. and Madam de Vincy discoursed with me in a manner which indicated that they wished to satisfy themselves fully that I really was what I claimed to be. The name of my family was unknown to them; but I had frequented in Paris several persons of their acquaintance. The details which I gave them concerning these people, in the course of our conversation, were of a nature to convince them that I moved in good company. My instinctive hatred towards Bonaparte was also a recommendation in my favor. Before the meal was over, I saw that every suspicion with regard to me had left their minds. The honesty of my glance, the candor of my brow, the simplicity of my replies, were no doubt conducive to this. After dinner, I thanked Madam de Vincy, took my stick, and arose to depart. The ladies said they would escort me some distance for the sake of the walk.

and also for the purpose of showing me the way to Roll. We strolled together through the vines and woods to the distance of about half a league from the Chateau. The sun was sinking in the west; we separated.

But ere I had advanced many paces alone, I was again called back by some one. I returned.

"Come, sir," said Madam de Vincy to me, "it is useless to put you to any further test, and also to pain ourselves by exposing you thus to the chances of adventure, alone and in a strange country. We feel an interest in you; you seem to be pleased with us; let us not part. I can imagine myself in your mother's place. I myself have a son of your age, who, at this moment, is fighting in the ranks of the Dutch army, and who may be wounded, in prison, or wandering about like yourself; it seems to me that by sheltering you I am preparing a similar shelter for him in the house of some other mother. Come back with us. We have lost our fortune, and our fare is frugal; but our poverty does not make us blush. One guest more cannot bring misfortune to a poor family. You will content yourself with what we have, and remain with us until the affairs of Europe disentangle themselves, and until we can see clearly beyond our mountains."

I was deeply moved by so much goodness. I re-entered the Chateau as if I had been one of the family. They gave me a room whence my eye could plunge into the lake; they gave me books to occupy my mind. But very few days had passed ere Mesdames de Vincy had ceased to heed my presence. To the elder, I was as a son; to the younger, as a brother. I accompanied them every evening in their rambles on foot through the mountains, or when they sailed upon the lake. I had sent to Geneva for a coat and some linen. I was introduced to some of the friends of the family in the vicinage of the Chateau. As the wife and daughter of my host often saw me scribble with pen or pencil, they asked me to make them the confidantes of some of my reveries. I read them an Ode to the liberation of Europe, and a few stanzas on the Alps, which seemed to them superior to the notion which they had formed, no doubt, of the talents of one so young. They entreated me to read them over again to M. de Vincy, who embraced me with great emotion when he heard the prayers for the independence of his country, and the imprecations upon the tyranny of the Empire. He would not believe that those verses were my own. To remove his doubts,

I had to write several additional strophes before his eyes, and on subjects suggested by him.

Thenceforward, the indulgence of that noble family greatly increased; their kindnesses were beyond increase. They had welcomed me for myself, not for my feeble talents. I lived amid love and happiness in that patriarchal dwelling, in which the piety, secluded life, and charity of my hosts reminded me of the roof which sheltered my mother. We spent our evenings on a long and wide terrace,—which lies at the foot of the Chateau, and overlooks the basin of the lake,—conversing on the occurrences of the times, and contemplating the tranquil and splendid scenes on which the moon casts its resplendent beams above the waters and the snows.

NOTE VIII.

From that spot you could see the crowns of the trees in the park and the tops of the pavilions of the Chateau of Coppet in which then dwelt, under the form and lineaments of a woman, the genius that most dazzled my youth.

"Since you cultivate your mind with so much care," said Madam de Vincy to me, one evening, "you must be one of the admirers of our neighbor, Madam de Staël."

I confessed with warmth my passion for the author of *Corinna*. I saw that the emotion of my soul and the enthusiasm of my admiration caused a fold of disdain to curl the lip of M. de Vincy, and somewhat pained his wife.

"I wish that I had it in my power to introduce you to your heroine," said she to me; "I am well acquainted with Madam de Staël. I like her character. I do full justice to her goodness and beneficence. But we do not visit one another any more. Her opinions and ours separate us. She is the daughter of the Revolution, through M. Necker. We belong to the religion of the past. Our communion is as incompatible as that of democracy and aristocracy. Although at this moment we are united by our common hatred towards Bonaparte, we may not visit one another, for that hatred does not proceed from the same principle. In him, *we* detest the Revolution which has deprived us of our rank and our sovereignty at Berne. She abhors in him the counter-Revolu-

tion. We could not agree. As to you, it is quite different. Madam de Staël is a neutral glory that shines on all parties, and must fascinate a heart of twenty. You must wish to see her. And yet you would somewhat grieve us if you were to visit her while staying with us. Our friends would not understand this indirect intercourse between two Chateaux inhabited by different spirits."

NOTE IX.

I understood these motives, and did not attempt to refute them; and, moreover, my extreme timidity in the presence of women and in the presence of genius would not permit me to think of an introduction to Madam de Staël without trembling. To perceive a ray of glory beneath her features, and adore it at a distance—that was enough for me. Such happiness was to be mine.

I ascertained, a few days after this conversation, that Madam de Staël, accompanied by Madam Recamier, who then resided at Coppet, often rode at evening, in a calash, along the road leading to Lausanne. I made inquiry about the usual hour of these rides. They varied according to circumstances. I therefore resolved to spend a whole day on the road, through fear of missing the desired opportunity. I had recourse to the pretext of a ramble on the Jura. I set out in the morning, taking with me a piece of bread and a volume of *Corinna*, and I placed myself in ambuscade beneath a bush, seated on the plank, with my feet hanging in the ditch on the side of the highway.

The hours flew by. Hundreds of vehicles passed along the road, but none of them contained the women on whose features I could place the names of Madam de Staël and Madam Recamier. I was about to return, sad and dissatisfied, when a cloud of dust arose at my right, on the road in the direction of Coppet. It was raised by two open calashes, drawn by magnificent horses, rolling towards Lausanne. Madam de Staël and Madam Recamier passed in front of me with the rapidity of lightning. I hardly had time to catch a glimpse, —through the dense cloud sent up by the wheels,—of a woman with black eyes who was speaking with animated gestures to another whose face might have served as the type

of the only real beauty—the beauty that charms the eye and seduces the heart. Four other women, young and likewise beautiful, followed in the second carriage. None of them paid any attention to me. I watched for a long time the retreating trace of the vehicles. I would have been pleased could I have arrested the flight of the horses; but Madam de Staël was far from suspecting that the most passionate admiration arose towards her from the dusty edge of the roadside ditch. All that was left to me of her person was a vague and confused image, which settled nothing in my imagination.

The ravishing face of Madam Recamier engraved itself there more deeply. The impression made by genius is evanescent; the impression made by charms is imperishable. Beauty has a ray which acts like the thunderbolt. It is the daguerreotype of the heart. The beauty of Madam Recamier was thus powerful and thus complete, merely because it was the envelop moulded on her mind and her soul. It was not her face that alone was beautiful, it was herself that was lovely. That beauty which then was romance, will one day be history. As bright as Aspasia—but a pure and Christian Aspasia—she was the object of the worship of a greater genius than Pericles. I, consequently, never knew Madam de Staël, but I recognised her at a later day in her daughter, the Duchess de Broglie. It was thus, perhaps, that she should have been known, to be contemplated under her most sublime incarnation.

In Madam de Broglie all that passion had become beauty, all that fire had become warmth, all that genius had become virtue. To die and leave such a trace of self in the world, was, for Madam de Staël, a living apotheosis that was due to her glory by heaven. It was in 1819 that I saw Madam de Broglie for the first time. She honored me until the day of her death with kindnesses, the remembrance of which shall always be sacred to me. I have devoted to her memory some of the last verses that I have written. Poetry, at a certain period of life, is nothing more than a funeral urn, in which we may burn a few perfumes to embalm memories that are sacred. The memory of Madam de Broglie needs no such incense. It is its own perfume. It embalms itself in its own virtue.

NOTE X.

Meanwhile I was beginning to feel a certain delicacy about burdening for such a length of time a family to which I was a stranger. I feared that my prolonged presence in the house might be indiscreet, and might even impose some constraint on M. and Madam de Vincy. The apparent means of that respectable family seemed to me not to be adequate at that time to the generosity of their heart. I perceived this, notwithstanding the noble liberality of their treatment. I did not wish to add, by the additional expense to which I necessarily subjected them, to that embarrassment of fortune and to those vexations of life, with whose symptoms I had been made too familiar at home not to discover them in another's family. I saw that they suffered, and I suffered for them. Theirs were kingly hearts struggling with the necessities of poverty. Heaven should have granted them a fortune proportionate to their generosity.

NOTE XI.

I pretended a journey into the meridional mountains of Switzerland. I left the Chateau, not without sorrow in the eyes of my hosts and in my own. I often turned my head to regret that hospitable dwelling and to bless it with my eyes. In the garb of a travelling workman I rambled alone and on foot, over the most beautiful and the wildest portions of Helvetia. After three weeks of this errant life, I returned to the shores of the lake of Geneva, and tarried on that part of the coast which is opposite the canton of Vaud, and to which Jean Jacques Rousseau so justly gave the preference. I quartered myself for a few days in the house of a boatman of the Chablais, whose somewhat isolated dwelling stood at the extremity of a small village. This man's occupations were to convey the peasants once or twice a week from one side of the lake to the other, fish in the lake, and cultivate a little ground. All the family he had was a daughter of twenty-five, who superintended his household affairs and prepared food for the fishermen and travellers. At the distance of about three hundred paces

from this worthy man's dwelling, stood another house which also belonged to him, and which was only used from time to time to lodge a few travellers, or custom-house officers on a tour of observation.

This house only contained one room above a cellar. I hired it. It was built on a piece of level ground, near the edge of a deep forest of chestnut-trees, and on the very shore of the lake, whose waves rolled against the wall. The only articles of furniture in my room were a bedstead without any mattress, on which were spread either straw or hay, sheets, and a blanket; a chair and a settle. The ledge of the window served me as a writing-table. Here I installed myself.

I went twice a day, morning and evening, to take my meals with the boatman at his house. Brown bread, eggs, fried fish, some of the sour sharp wine of the country, composed those repasts. The boatman was honest; his daughter obliging and attentive. After a few days of this life in common, we became friends. I sent the boatman once a week to procure books and news for me at the circulating libraries of Lausanne or Nyons. I had ink, pencils, paper. I spent the rainy days reading and writing in my room; the days of sunshine I spent in following the long windings of the borders of the lake, or the lost paths in the forest of chestnut-trees. In the evening, I remained long after supper, killing the hours of darkness in the boatman's house, conversing with him, with his daughter, sometimes with the schoolmaster and the pastor of the village, who remained until a late hour with us. After returning to my room, I there found, before the hour of slumber, the soothing murmur of the lake, whose every billow rolled the pebbles upon the shore, and carried them away again.

My room was so close to the water, that in tempestuous weather, the waves of the lake, as they broke upon the beach, dashed their foam against my window. I have never so closely studied the murmurs, the moans, the rage, the wails, the sobs, and the undulations of the waters, as during those nights and days thus spent all alone in the monotonous company of a lake. I could have written the poem of the waters without omitting the smallest note. Nor never have I ever so thoroughly enjoyed solitude, that voluntary winding-sheet of man, in which he wraps himself to taste the voluptuousness of being dead to earth. In the morning, I could see the large white Chateau of Vincy sparkle in the sun, on the opposite shore, at seven leagues' distance;—I might have gone back there, had

I chosen again to abuse the touching hospitality of its owners. I merely wrote a letter of thanks to my hosts, informing them of my new residence.

NOTE XII.

All communication with France had been cut off in consequence of the war. I knew not whether I should ever return to my native land. I was firmly resolved never to re-enter it to endure the oppression of thought and the political asphyxia, in which I felt myself smothered by the brutality of the Empire. I lived on nothing. Nevertheless, my journey into Switzerland had somewhat lessened the weight of my leathern belt, which only contained twenty-five louis at the period of my departure from France. I began to think seriously of the advantage I might draw from my youth and my studies, should I give up my country. I settled on the idea of entering some Russian family for a short time, as a teacher of languages or private tutor; of afterwards travelling into Crimea and Circassia, and thence into Persia, in search of the climate of the East; in search of its poetry, its combats, its marvellous adventures and fortunes, which the imagination of twenty always indistinctly sees in all that is mysterious and distant. It was under the influence of these feelings that I wrote this ballad, which has never been inserted in my works:

THE SWALLOW.*

TO MADEMOISELLE DE VINCY.

Why wilt thou fly me, wand'ring bird?
  Come rest thy weary wing near me.
A heart now calls thee—hear its word;
  I am a wanderer like thee.

'Tis destiny unites us here,
  Come then and nestle close to me;
We'll mourn together, do not fear!
  For am I not alone like thee?

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* For this very beautiful version of one of M. de Lamartine's earliest effusions, I am indebted to the gifted pen of my esteemed friend, J. R. Phillips, Esq.—Tr.

Perhaps Fate drove thee from the nest
Where thou wast born,—'tis so with me.
Come, then, and on my window rest;—
Am I not exiled too, like thee?

Hast need of shelter for thy brood
Of little tremblers now near me?
I'll warm their down and give them food,—
I've seen my mother like to thee!

Seest thou the shore of France so fair,
That Home which oped its door to me?
The branch of Hope, go! thither bear—
For am I not its bird like thee?

Though in my native land may reign
A power to close that door on me;
Her banish'd Freedom to regain,
Ah! have we not our sky like thee?

I sent this sonnet by the boatman to Mademoiselle de Vincy. It was my farewell to my hosts.

Noble and hospitable family! The remembrance of its kindnesses has never forsaken me. I have always regretted never to have had it in my power to make some return to any of its members, for their good services, their generosity of heart, and their brotherly treatment towards me! The father and mother died ere the fortunes of their house were restored to console them. That house, as I am now told, has again become rich and prosperous. May God's blessings fall upon the children in memory of their father and mother! Since then, I have never journeyed on the road from Geneva to Lausanne, without raising my eyes towards the Chateau de Vincy and collecting my thoughts, to feel the influence of remembrance and regret. For several weeks, that dwelling was as the paternal roof to me. My heart is attached to it with something of the feeling which man entertains for his home. Of all the plants that may henceforward be reared to adorn the gardens and the threshold of that Chateau, the most perennial and the most lasting is the gratitude of the poet for the roof of hospitality.

NOTE XIII.

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* * * * I returned at that period to Paris to resume my military service in the king's guard. It was then that I again found myself in company with one of the friends of my childhood, who had also entered the *gardes-du-corps*, (the body-guard.) His name was Count Aymon de Virieu. He has already been partially seen in Italy with me. He was the first and best of my friends; or rather, that common-place name expresses but imperfectly the nature of the feeling that had united us from earliest boyhood. It was something like the ties of consanguinity, or like the relationship of the soul. I was his brother, and he was mine. When I lost him, I lost one-half of my own life. My mind was almost as active in him as in myself. On the day of his death, an immense and deep silence surrounded me. It seemed to me that the living echo of my heart had departed from this world with him. I feel myself yet, but I no longer hear myself.

NOTE XIV.

Aymon de Virieu was the son of the Count de Virieu, one of the most eminent members of the Constitutional party in the Constituent Assembly, the friend of *Mounier*, *Tollendal*, *Clermont-Tonnerre*, and all those worthy but visionary men, who wished to reform the monarchy without shaking its foundation. We can only reform that over which we have dominion. After they had placed the throne in the hands of an assembly, they found that they could only release it piecemeal. Hence, repentance speedily seized upon them, and they turned against the Revolution which they had made, ere that Revolution was completed. Some emigrated, others called themselves Monarchists, and tried to form those intermediary parties which are always crushed between two contending camps. The boldest among them understood and took advantage of the opportunity offered by anarchy to stir up the provinces against the Convention.

Amongst the latter was the Count de Virieu. When he descended from the tribune, he took up arms. Lyons was rebelling against tyranny. In that wholly municipal insurrection he saw some chance of bringing that city and the South into an involuntary movement in favor of royalism and monarchical restoration. He hastened thither. During the siege of that city by the Republican army, he was intrusted with the command of the cavalry of Lyons. In the course of the night which preceded the surrender of the stronghold, he placed himself at the head of his men and attempted to cut his way through the troops of the Convention. He succeeded; but, in saving some of the companions of his flight, he was killed at a few leagues' distance from Lyons. His body was never found. All that remained of him was his name, which was graven in our annals amongst the names of the founders of our Revolution.

NOTE XV.

After his death, his widow, who had remained within the walls of the city with her only son, only escaped the scaffold by flight. Clothed as a mendicant, she wandered amongst the mountains of Dauphiny. Here, she intrusted her son to a devoted and faithful peasant woman who reared the child of the outlaw amongst her own. Madam de Virieu crossed the frontier and lived in Germany by the labor of her own hands, with the constant hope of the return of her husband, whose death was not known to her. She was a woman of an heroical nature, and one whose piety turned to the most tender and exalted mysticism. Her love for the memory of her husband bordered on ecstatic vision. Her long life, from the day on which she lost him until the moment of her own death, was nought but a tear, a hope, and an invocation. After her return to France, having recovered her son and her daughters, and collected the scattered fragments of the wreck of her large fortune, she secluded herself on an estate in Dauphiny, where she led a wholly conventual life, which was only vivified by her good works and her affection for her children. The Jesuits, under the name of "Fathers of the Faith," had recently established a college at Belley, on the frontiers of France and Savoy. The reputation of this college increased daily, amidst

all the remains of the educational institutions which had been scattered by the Revolution. It formed a happy contrast, also, with that system of education at the tap of the drum practised in the Imperial Lyceums, in which Bonaparte, the Emperor, wished to clothe the mind of all France in a uniform and make a nation of soldiers instead of a nation of citizens. Noble families, the enemies of the Empire, and religious families belonging to the middling classes, sent their sons from France, Savoy, Germany, and Italy to this budding institution. Within its walls three hundred young men, from all countries, received an education which was both pious and liberal. I am not a partisan of the education of the age by the clergy; I detest Theocracy,—that most odious of all the forms of tyranny,—because it claims its form in the name of the God of Liberty, and perpetuates it by consecrating it. I dread the influence of the priesthood in governments; but none of these considerations shall deter me from acknowledging and proclaiming the truth; or make me deny the existence of worth wheresover it is to be found.

So long as the spirit of the age shall not become a religious faith which, in its turn, consumes the soul, laical institutions will contend unequally with ecclesiastical establishments. The state must also become a religion. If it is nought but a lifeless administration, it is vanquished. There is no budget equal to a grain of Faith for the purchase of souls.

Madam de Virieu instantly placed her son in this establishment, to which I was also brought by my mother. Here he and I met. To all appearances, but little analogy existed between our characters. He was gay, I serious; he was turbulent, I calm; he was fond of raillery, I of meditation; he was skeptical, I pious. But he had a very tender heart, and a superior mind, under an apparently harsh exterior. I did not court his company; it was he who courted mine for a long time, without being disheartened by my lack of taste for his witty giddiness, and my supineness in responding to his friendly advances.

As we grew up, however, and as our minds arose above the capacities of the majority of our companions, our intimacy increased. Between he and I there grew up a sort of mental confidence, above the heads of our fellow-disciples, and even of our teachers. I was the only one who understood him. This separation from the herd threw us all the more into the society of one another. Hence our somewhat cool friendship

was a friendship of the mind, long before it became a friendship of the heart. It was only after leaving college, and when we again met at the age of passion and tenderness, that we loved one another with a complete and feeling affection.

Virieu, who was a few years my elder, was approaching the age of adolescence at that period. His was one of those light and curly heads of the North, with prominent foreheads and large organs, which look as though they had been moulded by the thumb of Michael Angelo. There was more of varied power discernible in his brow than of harmony and regularity in those numerous faculties. His eyes were blue, but as sparkling as black eyes. In them were reflected all the grace and all the brilliancy of his soul. The rest of his face revealed strength mingled with a slight degree of severity. His glance twinkled like light upon the waters. His nose, like that of Socrates, was turned up, and its nostrils were dilated by the fine muscles of irony. His mouth, the lips of which were too far apart, was more the mouth of the orator who pours forth his words, than of the philosopher who ponders them.

In his attitude, in his gestures, and in his speech, there was a certain disdain of the crowd; there was an inward feeling of superiority of race and pride of birth, which recalled to mind those habits of the nobility who are accustomed to gaze down upon the majority of mankind as if from a great height. His mind was so vast, so full, so active, that it overflowed, as one may say, and was embarrassed by its very aptness—made sterile by the very excess of its fruitfulness; like those men whose too active imaginations send too many words at once to their lips, and who from the very superabundance of their expressions, stammer them forth confusedly.

In fact, he did stammer and stutter in his childhood. His speech only became calm and distinct after the fermentation of youth had subsided. Although he was almost always the lowest in all his classes, his companions and his masters looked upon him, with general consent, as the highest. It was well known that he would have been the highest had he chosen; but his mind seldom took the direction which they wished to give it; he was at mathematics when we were at Latin, at history when we were expounding the poets, amongst the poets when we were reviewing the philosophers. All this was overlooked. He travelled a different road, but he always reached the goal; he never reached it at the appointed hour, however. His mind had a free gait of its own; it could not

follow the beaten track; it made a path for itself according to its own fancies; it was born for the solitudes of the mind.

NOTE XVI.

If he studied less than we, he thought a great deal more. His guide was *Montaigne*, of whom his mother was a descendant. That *dallying, doubting* genius had partly entered the young man's blood. Montaigne's book was his catechism. At the age of twelve, he knew by heart almost all the chapters of that encyclopœdia of skepticism. He used to repeat them to me constantly. I struggled with all my might against that exclusive taste for Montaigne. That doubt which takes pleasure in doubting, to me seemed infernal. Man was born to believe, or die. Montaigne can only produce sterility in the mind that enjoys him. Believing nothing, is doing nothing.

The cynical character of Montaigne's expressions also shocked and wounded the delicacy of my sensibility. Foul words leave stains upon the soul. An obscene expression offended my mind as much as a tainted odor offends the sense of smell. All that I liked in Montaigne was that charming nudity of style which unveils the graceful forms of the mind, and discloses to view the very palpitations of man's heart beneath the epidermis. But his philosophy awakened all my pity. It is not the philosophy of swine, for he thinks. Nor is it the philosophy of man, for he comes to no conclusion. But it is the philosophy of the child, that trifles with every thing.

Now, this world is not a puerility. God's work certainly deserves to be taken seriously, and human nature is sufficiently noble and sufficiently unfortunate to be looked upon with pity at least, if not with respect. Jesting on such subjects is not merely cruel, it is impious.

NOTE XVII.

This was what I then said to Virieu, and what he afterwards said to himself, when the solemn tones of passion and

grief at length rang in his soul. He was too assiduous a delver in the mine of thought not to reach its foundation—that is to say, God.

A few years after the termination of our studies, we met at Chambery; I tarried there a day or two to see him as I journeyed for the first time into Italy. Our friendship was renewed with a better knowledge of ourselves, and with a mutual inclination of mind which was more marked than ever. Three years' separation had taught us how to regret each other. We swore serious and unchangeable fraternity to one another. We kept our oath religiously. From that day forward we were firmly united in heart and mind.

NOTE XVIII.

We have lived a double life. Six months afterwards he came and joined me at Rome. We travelled a long time together; we each completed the other's education; what one lacked, the other gave him. In that daily interchange of our faculties, he brought thought, I feeling; he brought criticism, I inspiration; he brought science, I imagination. He never wrote; he was like those delicate minds that are never satisfied with their own work, and prefer to keep it eternally in a state of conception within their own breasts, rather than produce it imperfectly, and profane their Ideal by revealing it. These minds are the greatest. They despair of ever reaching the height of their own thoughts, either by words, art, or action. They live a fruitless life; but not from impotency,—from superabundance of strength and from a morbid passion for perfection. These men are the virgins of mind. They only marry with their Ideal, and die without leaving any of their offspring upon earth. It was thus that Virieu died, taking with him a genius that was unknown.

NOTE XIX.

After our return to France, we were almost inseparable. At Paris we lived together. In the summer-time I would go and spend whole months in the bosom of his family, in the

solitude of his dwelling in Dauphiny, between his mother, who was wholly devoted to God, and his youngest sister, who was wholly devoted to her mother and her brother. This sister, Mademoiselle Stephanie de V***, although young, rich, and charming, had renounced the world and marriage, to devote herself entirely to her family and to painting, the genius of which she possessed. She is a female Greuze.

We used to spend the long autumn days reading to her, while she painted; or conceiving subjects for pictures, to which the rapid improvisation of her pencil instantly gave form and life. She adored her brother, and took an interest in me on his account. Madam de Virieu, seated in a large armchair near the chimney-corner, rapt in sorrowful silence and religious contemplation and prayer, presided over these family evenings; from time to time she would cast a tender glance and an absent smile upon us, as if to say:

"My only participation in any one of the joys of this earth is through you."

The tranquil and innocent mode of life of that holy family refreshed and quieted my heart, which was almost always agitated or fatigued by passions. It was the resting-place of my early days.

At the period of the downfall of the Empire,—which Virieu and all the young men of the day detested as much as I,—we together entered the military household of the king. We left it together, when that guard was disbanded. We commenced our diplomatic career at the same time. He followed the Duke de Richelieu into Germany. He was attached to the embassy of the Duke de Luxembourg to Brazil. He accompanied M. de Laferronaye to the Congress of Verona. He was Secretary of Legation at Turin and Munich. Secret sorrows impaired his health. He forsook diplomacy, and returned to his family. These separations, which had been filled up by a daily correspondence, had not loosened in the slightest degree the ties of our friendship. We heard each other's voice from a greater distance, that was all. Our purse was as free to either as our thoughts. How often has not his fortune made up for the insufficiency or the disasters of my own! He neither knew nor cared whether I would ever be able to repay him. He would have spent his soul for me and have kept no account of his life. How could he have kept any account of his money?

I never offered him the affront of being grateful. My grati-

tude consisted in keeping no accounts, in separating nothing between us. How much is there which does not belong to him in what is mine at the present day? Mind, soul, heart, fortune;—God alone could say—"This belongs to the one, this to the other." Men who are thus united should also be able to commingle their memories as they have commingled their lives, and be known by the same name to posterity as one single being. This would be truer and at the same time sweeter. Why should there be two names where, in reality, there was only one man?

NOTE XX.

A few years afterwards he married a young maiden, whose modest blandishments, virtue, and passionate attachment, forever wrapped his life in the obscurity of domestic felicity. His superior mind was not enfeebled; but it descended from the clouds upon earth. His soul, which had formerly been searching and skeptical, thought that it had found the truth in happiness, and repose in his mother's faith. He shut himself up in the love of his wife and children. He set bounds to his life, and never overleaped them afterwards. His heart never left that family enclosure, except through the friendship for me which had remained in his bosom in all its entireness. From the bank on which he had settled himself, he watched me as I advanced, rose, or fell. His belief was more in the past than in the future, like all those men who are dissatisfied with the times. He took but little interest in the present agitations of the political world. He always loved liberty, but he only expected it from God, as he saw stability in nothing but faith. His mother's mysticism threw its consoling illusions over his piety.

He often wrote to me about the affairs of the times. His letters were sad and solemn, like the voice of a man speaking from the depths of the sanctuary to those assembled in the public square. Once, I remained fifteen days without receiving a line from him. I then received one from his sister informing me of his demise. He had died in the arms of his wife, blessing his son, and naming me amongst those he regretted to leave on earth and hoped to meet elsewhere. Religion had

immortalized his last breath in advance. Commencing the journey of life a skeptic, his eyes had been unsealed as he advanced along the road to the other world. At the extremity of the path he no longer doubted. He was approaching God!

In him I lost the living witness of all the first half of my life. I felt that Death had torn out the dearest page of my history; it is buried with my friend.

NOTE XXI.

It was in Dauphiny, in the ruins of the old castle of his family, called *Pupetières*, that I wrote for him the poetical meditation entitled *le Vallon*, (the Dale.) The verses recall the site, and the feelings which were made to murmur in our bosoms by that solitude, those woods and those waters. If the murmurs of the woods and the waters were written, they would be far superior to those feeble strophes. The poet's soul is a running water which writes its murmurs and sings them; but we write them with the notes of man, and nature writes them with the notes of God.

After definitively leaving the service, I returned to the paternal roof, and afterwards resumed my travels. They often took me towards the Alps. This is the proper place to make mention of a man who was one of my principal attractions in those mountains. That man was the Baron *Louis de Vignet*. He died, a few years ago, the Ambassador of Sardinia at Naples. His grave contains one of the dearest relics of the life of my heart. What can man do for the man who is no more? Nothing, but write a cold epitaph. Marble keeps the memory longer than the heart; that is the reason why a name and a word are graven on a sepulchre. But after the generation has been swept away, the men who pass it by, neither understand the word nor the name. Hence, they must be expounded.

Louis de Vignet, whom I knew at college, was the son of a senator of Chambery, and the nephew, on his mother's side, of Count Joseph de Maistre, the philosopher, and Count Xavier de Maistre, the Sterne of the age, but a more sensible and more natural Sterne than the English writer.

At the Jesuit college, Louis de Vignet and I were the two

rival children who contended for all the prizes which the impru dent pride of the teachers presented to the emulation of their disciples. As he was my senior by a few years, riper in mind and possessed of more power of will in his work than I, he often lost his temper. I was not jealous; nature had not given me an envious disposition. He, on the contrary, always seemed dissatisfied, or but little pleased with victory, and humiliated by defeat. We were the Italian and the French antagonists. Our two natures offered the contrast of these two national types in our features, as well as in our characters. Vignet was a tall young man, somewhat round-shouldered, whose head, covered with black hair, bent towards his breast. His complexion was pale and somewhat sallow; his deep-set eye was hid beneath long lashes; his sharp aquiline nose was moulded with admirable delicacy. His thin lips but seldom separated. An habitual expression of bitterness and scorn slightly depressed the corners of his mouth. His chin was long and carved at right angles, like the head of the Arabian horse. The oval of his face was elongated, flexible, and graceful. He spoke but little. He always walked alone. His age and the energy of his character made him feel himself above us. His companions did not like him. His instructors feared him. There was something of the malecontent in his silence and of the conspirator in his solitary habits.

He did not dissimulate his contempt for the religious exercises to which we were subjected. He boasted of his incredulity, and almost of his atheism. I felt admiration for his talent and compassion for his loneliness, but very little inclination towards his person. In his glance there was something of the German *Faust* which fascinated the mind like an enigma,—which commanded admiration, but forbade intimacy.

None of the men whom I have known had been endowed by nature with such powerful faculties. His mind was a sharp and strong instrument which his will used as it listed, and which nothing could resist. He had the natural gift of style, as if his pen had followed the outlines of the greatest writers. He was naturally classical in his discourse; a harmonious and sensible poet in his verses; a bold and domineering philosopher before the age of thought. We all grew pale before him in our compositions. He sinned, however, through excess of research and a slight degree of stiffness. Ease and improvisation sometimes gave me the advantage. I surpassed him only by the absence of a few defects; but I was far from

priding myself in these victories, and I, more than any one, acknowledged his superiority of age, labor, and talent.

NOTE XXII.

He terminated his studies three years before I had completed mine. He left a name amongst us like that trace which a superior man leaves behind him when he passes through a crowd. We always spoke of him with admiration mingled with a slight degree of terror. We thought that he was destined for some high but sinister vocation. We expected something great from him, without knowing exactly what. That expectation was a sort of presentiment of fate. We afterwards learned that he was studying law in the school at Grenoble; that there, as everywhere else, he was admired, but not liked; that he lived in proud disdain of the crowd; that he indulged in none of the silly vanities of the youth of those schools; that he even felt a stoical pride in his poverty, like Machiavelli when young, and that he was often met in broad daylight carrying his shoes through the streets, to have them mended at the neighboring cobbler's; or eating a piece of bread, with a book under his arm. This pride of sobriety and manly independence heeded not the scorn of his companions, and evinced a soul that was more powerful than their sarcasm. But he was not jeered at; he was respected, and the proofs which he opportunely gave of his talents as a civilian and orator already placed him high in the estimation of the town.

Six years had elapsed since our separation, when chance brought us together again at Chambery, in which place I was spending a few days on my way back from a jaunt in the Alps. At that period I was in all the ebullition of my most hair-brained and violent years. There was neither enough air in the sky, nor enough fire in the sun, nor enough space upon the earth for the want of agitation and combustion which consumed me. I was a living fever; I had its delirium and agitation in all my limbs. The regular habits of my years of study and the gentle piety of our mothers and our masters were far from me. My friendships, like my feelings, ran riot, and profaned themselves at random. I was intimate with all those of the youth of my country and my time who, under

happy forms, were the most giddy, the most turbulent, and the most vicious. I rushed headlong into all sorts of excesses; and yet dissipation was repugnant to me. My wildness was merely the consequence of imitation, not the effect of natural propensities. When I was alone, solitude purified me.

I was in this state of mind and body when I met Vignet. I was hardly able to recognise him. Never had so few years operated such a complete change in a physiognomy. I saw a young man with a modest demeanor, a slow and measured gait, a tone of voice both clear and insinuating, features that were placid, harmonious, and overclouded by a shade of melancholy. He approached me rather as a father would approach a son, than as a young man greeting a companion. He embraced me with tender feeling. He accused himself of the wicked jealousies which our rivalries in the arena of letters had awakened in his bosom; he told me that the traces that they had left in his soul were shame, repentance, and a passionate desire to link himself to me for life in the bonds of an indissoluble friendship. His features, his gestures, and the limpidness of his blue eyes, were in harmony with his words. My heart expanded to welcome the outpourings of his own. I felt that that grave, austere, and tender-hearted man, who had been tempered by seclusion in the depths of the mountains; who had had the strength to keep himself aloof from the current of folly and thoughtlessness which was sweeping us away; who was original in all that was good, while we were striving to be wretched imitators in all that was bad, was better than the friends of my pleasures.

NOTE XXIII.

A fascinating grace of expression flowed from his lips. As we ascended in the morning, at sunrise, the little dale of chestnut-trees which leads to the *Charmettes*—that flower-clad cradle of the first love and early genius of Jean Jacques Rousseau—he related to me the change which had taken place in his mind. At that moment, Vignet's slender and stooping form—his bowed head—the ringlets of his raven hair, which protruded from his hat behind, and contrasted with the pallor of his hollow cheeks—his slow and pensive step—even his black

coat, tight and threadbare, closely buttoned across his chest—and finally, the tender but somewhat dejected tone of his voice, made him bear a striking resemblance to the picture which my fancy had drawn of Rousseau's picturesque creation, the *Vicaire Savoyard*, that Plato of the mountains, whose Cape *Sunium* was an humble village in the Chablais.

NOTE XXIV.

His father was poor; the Revolution had deprived him of the dignity and emoluments of a senator. He had retired to the only small estate which he owned at a league's distance from Chambery, near a pretty little village called *Servolex*. He had died here, a few years afterwards, while his son was at college.

My friend's mother,—an adorable woman, who was worshipped by her children,—had sold a few fields of their inheritance, year by year, to complete the education of her two sons and only daughter. The elder of her sons, who was not known to me, lived at Geneva, where he was completing his studies. The poor mother dwelt alone with her daughter at Servolex, on the remains of the family property. She had fallen into a decline, in consequence of the destruction of her hopes, the decay of her house, and the death of her husband. Feeling that she was rapidly descending to the grave, she had recalled her son Louis from Grenoble, to take her place in the administration of the small estate, and to be his sister's protector.

NOTE XXV.

Vignet had hurried home. The sight of his dying mother had overwhelmed him. One single passion—his filial tenderness for that good woman—had extinguished all others in his bosom. His pride had been drowned in his tears. The example of that calm and serene submission to the pangs of death which was daily given to him by his mother, had made him submit to the pangs of life. Piety had not persuaded

him, but it had softened his soul. That God that he was unable to see, he could feel and hear within himself. For the first time, he had prayed thousands of times at the foot of that bed of suffering and peace. He had embraced his mother's religion to be able to pray in the same language in which she prayed. She had languished two long years, then died, leaving him her religion as a sole inheritance. He had sworn to her, at that hour when every word is sacred, to accept the legacy of her soul. He kept his oath. His mother was his religion; his promise was his persuasion; his remembrance was his faith.

NOTE XXVI.

This interruption of two years in his pursuits, however, these two years curtailed from his studies, had destroyed all his plans and expectations for the future. His ambition was buried beneath the stone which covered his mother's grave, in the cemetery of Servolex. His health had been affected by solitude, confinement, and grief. The tension of his nerves at too early an age, by intense thought and excessive sorrow, had shattered them. A serene but deep and incurable melancholy veiled and darkened his every horizon. He despised men and their thoughts, which are as petty as themselves.

He had resolutely renounced every career. He had made up his mind to live alone with his sister, a young person who was every way worthy of him, on their little estate near Servolex. He owned about thirty thousand francs worth of vineyards, woods, and land around his house, the revenue of which was sufficient for the restricted wants of his frugal life. Books, prayer, and a few literary labors occupied his days. Perhaps there was at the bottom of his soul a feeling of love for a young orphan girl who was as poor as himself, and who often was his sister's companion? But that love, if it existed, was never betrayed save by the constancy of a silent worship. He had too little faith in his fortune ever to make a young girl share it. All that his heart wanted was a friend. He offered to be mine!

He had often thought of me during the six years that had passed, as the only one to whom his heart could become attached. He had not dared to write to me. He knew that his

once sour and unsociable disposition had left amongst his companions a feeling of aversion towards him. He also knew that I was deep in all the frivolities of a worldly life along with friends of the moment. He deplored this for my sake. I was not of that flesh of which the world makes its playthings and its idols. I had a soul that would rise above that sink of vanities and vices. That soul must aspire to rise, not fall. My mother, like his own, was pious. The vitiated atmosphere in which I moved certainly grieved her. As he was my senior in years, and especially in sorrow, which counts days as years, he offered me an affection that was more holy and more sincere than that of my young associates in dissipation. He would devote himself to me as a brother.

NOTE XXVII.

I felt the sincerity and especially the truthful accent of his words, and they moved me. Conversing thus, we entered the deserted house of the Charmettes; whose door was opened to admit us by a poor woman, as if its owners had only left it the day before, and were expected to return that evening. For us, the charming image of Madam de Warens, and of Jean Jacques Rousseau in his boyhood, filled the three small rooms on the ground-floor. We sought for the place where they used to seat themselves. We rambled through the small garden, and we rested ourselves on the seat at the end of the walk, beneath the woodbine bower in which the first confession of a pure love was made—a love that afterwards suffered such profanation. Vignet, although he was a voluntary Christian, had in his heart as much enthusiasm as myself for Jean Jacques Rousseau—that sole writer of the eighteenth century whose genius was a soul. We spent a portion of the day in that garden, which overran with redolence and sunshine, as if the very plants and trees were rejoiced to receive guests who were worthy to love their former masters. We only left it at sundown, and we left it thus.

I felt how far above those whom I called my friends was this young man, who was born near the cradle of Rousseau; who was inspired like Rousseau; who was poor and unfortunate like Rousseau; but who was much purer and more religious than

Rousseau; and I also felt that I was indebted to the Charmettes for more than a vain reminiscence of a great man—for the friendship of a good man. The only wish of my heart was to admire.

NOTE XXVIII.

Vignet took me to his house near Servolex, and introduced me to his family. Two of his mother's uncles lived at Chambery, or in the environs of Servolex. They were the brothers of Count Jóseph and Count Xavier de Maistre, who resided in Russia. One was a Colonel, who had left the service; the other the Canon and presently the Bishop of Aoste, in Savoy. These two men were worthy of the glorious name which the versatile genius of their brothers has since made for their house. They moreover possessed the genius of goodness. Their conversation sparkled with that glow of gentle mirth, whose laugh costs benevolence no effort. Nature had endowed that family with the gift of grace. In them the subtlety of the Italian was hid beneath the ingenuousness of the mountaineer of Savoy. Tossed for a long time by the events of the Revolution, driven from one shore to another, they were like those rough stones of their own mountains, which have been rolled by the avalanche into the stream, which the torrent has worn and rubbed and polished for centuries, which have become bright to the eye and smooth to the touch, but which always remain stones, nevertheless, beneath the surface that has polished them.

NOTE XXIX.

Mixed up, as they had been, with different events and different men, they knew the whole century by heart. Every thing appeared to them at first in its ludicrous and ironical light. The only thing that they viewed seriously was the honor of God. All else with them belonged to the comedy of human life. They laughed at the play, but they pitied the actors.

The Canon, especially, was the most eccentric and original

creature I have ever known. In the morning he wrote sermons, fragments of which he read to us in the evening; and he made a repertory of all the ridiculous, but harmless, anecdotes he could collect during the day; a sort of Dictionary of Mirth, or Encyclopedia of Laughter, for the use of the family and the neighbors. But that laughter was the laughter of an angel and a saint. It never brought a blush to the cheek of the listener, nor a tear to the eye of the victim. It was the ludicrous side of nature, but never its bad side. He was very intimate with Madame de Staël, whose principles he did not like, whose enthusiasm he made sport of, but whose goodness he adored. Their correspondence was frequent and strange. It was benign and tolerant Religion casting a little dust on the wings of Philosophy, but without any intention to blemish them. It was the courteous and playful contention of Poesy and Prose. They made one another shine by struggling with one another. I used to spend delightful days in the midst of that domestic intimacy.

It was at another period that I became acquainted with the Count Joseph de Maistre, the senior of all the brothers, the *Levi* of that tribe. From his own lips I heard the perusal of the *Soirées de Saint-Petersbourg*, (Evenings in Saint Petersburg,) before their publication. Neither the friends nor the enemies of his philosophy know the man in his writings.

The Count de Maistre was a tall man, with a handsome and virile face of a martial character, and a high and open brow on which a few beautiful locks of silvery hair floated like the remains of a crown. His eye was sharp, lively, clear, and frank. His mouth wore the habitual expression of archness which belonged to all the family. In his bearing, he had the dignity of his rank, mind, and age. It would have been impossible to have met him without stopping and marking him, with the suspicion that you were gazing at something great.

Leaving his mountains at an early age, he had first lived in Turin; then been driven by events to Sardinia, and afterwards to Russia; whither he had travelled without passing either through France, England, or Germany. He had been morally expatriated at a very tender age. All that he knew was through books, and he had read but very few. Hence his marvellous eccentricity of thought and style. His was a soul in the rough, but a great soul; a mind that was but slightly polished, but vast; a style that was uncultivated, but powerful. Abandoned thus to himself, all his philosophy was nothing

more than the theory of his religious instincts. All the holy passions of his mind had imbodied themselves in faith. He had formed for himself the dogmas of his prejudices. That was all the philosopher. In him the writer was far superior to the thinker, but the man was greatly superior even to the writer and thinker. His faith, to which he too often gave the garb of sophistry, and the attitude of the paradox which baffles reason, was sincere, sublime, and fruitful in his life. It was a classical virtue, or rather a rough virtue with the broad features of the Old Testament, like the Moses of Michael Angelo, whose forms yet bear the imprint of the chisel that rough-hewed them. Beneath the man you yet feel the presence of the rock. Hence, this genius was only rough-hewn; but its proportions were great. This is the reason why M. de Maistre is popular. Were he more harmonious and more perfect, he would be less pleasing to the crowd, which never examines any thing closely. He is an uncultivated Bossuet, an illiterate Tertullian.

BOOK XII.

NOTE I.

The society of these people was very useful to me. It freed my mind from that philosophy of the guard-house, and from that effeminate literature which was then in vogue in France. It showed me the men of nature, in the place of the worn-out and impressionless copies which then formed the thinking world at Paris. It transplanted me into a new, original, and eccentric world, whose type had hitherto been unknown to me. It was not only the society of Alpine genius in a valley of Savoy; it was also the society of youth, grace, and beauty. For around those centennial trunks of the family of De Maistre and Vignet, there were young shoots overflowing with sap; geniuses full of promise; and souls about to blossom. I was welcomed as the son or brother of all the members of that surprising and charming family.

Time, death, different countries, opposite opinions and phi-

losophies, have separated us since then. But were I to live a century, I would never forget those days spent during a whole summer, in the dwelling of Colonel de Maistre, at Bissy, and at the residence of my friend, Louis de Vignet, near Servolex.

The drawing-room was in the open air. At one time a wood of young pines on the top of the lowest green hills of the Mont du Chat, whence you overlook the truly Arcadian valley of Chambery and its lake on the left. At another, a walk of high hedges at the extremity of the garden at Servolex—a walk raised in the form of a terrace, on a dale covered with leaves and high vines intertwined with walnut-trees. The sun silently travelled across the bit of azure sky between the Mont du Chat and the first peaks of the Alps of *Nivoley*. The shadow at the foot of the trees either shrunk away or stretched itself along the ground. The Count de Maistre dreamily sketched figures in the sand, with the end of the stick which he had culled on the Caucasus. He related his long exiles and various adventures to his brothers, who listened with attention and respect. His eldest daughter, pensive, silent, and collected, played some of the melancholy airs of Scythia on the piano, not far from us. The windows of the parlor, which were open, permitted the notes to reach our ears. The Canon de Maistre read his breviary in a distant walk of the garden. From time to time he involuntarily cast a glance of abstraction and regret in our direction. It was evident that he was impatient to finish the psalm, in order to come and join in the conversation which was going on without him.

NOTE II.

The youngest of the Count de Maistre's daughters, who at that time was not more than seventeen or eighteen years of age, bore on her brow, in her eyes, and on her lips, the rays of her father's genius. She was a daughter of Mount Sinai, glowing with the beams of the sacred bush, inspired with the theocratical doctrines of the family. She copied her father's writings; and it was said that she herself wrote many a page which her modesty alone would not permit to bloom with all the lustre of a talent that was natural to her house. She was a Christian *Corinna*, on the border of another lake, at a few leagues' distance from the philosophical and revolutionary

Corinna of Coppet, (Madam de Staël.) I have never read any of the productions of this young girl; but her eloquence was manly, nervous, and accentuated, like her voice. At times the religious or political inspiration which involuntarily seized upon her would raise her from the grass-grown bank on which she sat next to us. She would walk, and talk the while, without perceiving that she was moving. Her feet seemed not to touch the earth, like the feet of phantoms or sibyls that come from a land of enchantment. At those moments she would utter pages of words which were carried away by tne wind, and which would have been worthy of the first thinkers, of the first writers of the age. Our cheeks would blanch as we hearkened to her. Since then, her father's name has shone upon her. Unexpected fortune has sought her out in her modest obscurity. I do not know what she can have done with her genius—a weapon for a man, a burden for a woman. I presume that she has changed it into virtues, as she has changed her riches into blessings.

NOTE III.

Louis de Vignet, his sister—who was as intelligent as her brother—and I, silently admired these eruptions of grace, fire, and faith. Theocracy, preached beneath such a beautiful sky, by such beautiful lips, in such a beautiful language, by a young girl who looked like a prophet's daughter, had a great charm for my imagination at that time. How beautiful it would be if God's kingdom had not men for its ministers! At a later day, I had to acknowledge that the kingdom of God could only be that eternal revelation whose code is the Word, and whose ministers are passing ages. I soon returned to that liberty which permits all Words to think and speak in all mankind.

NOTE IV.

Louis de Vignet recited to us sweet and melancholy verses which he gathered, one by one, amid the heath that carpeted his mountains, and which he would never publish through fear

of robbing them of that bloom which the open air strips from the soul, as it does from the peaches and the grapes that deck his garden wall. I was also beginning at that period to lisp a few rhymes. I read them, blushing the while, in the presence of the Count de Maistre and his daughter.

"This young Frenchman," would M. de Maistre say to his nephew, "has a beautiful language to be the instrument of his thoughts. We will see what use he will make of it when he attains the age of thought. How fortunate these Frenchmen are!" would he add fretfully. "Ah! had I been born at Paris!—But I have never seen Paris. The only language I possess is the jargon of our Savoy!"

He did not know then that it is the man that makes the language, and that that jargon was to become great eloquence; that the more languages are handled, the more they fade; and that the French language would be renovated at Servolex in his genius, as it had been renovated at the *Charmettes* in the ignorance of Jean Jacques Rousseau.

The nephew of the Count de Maistre subsequently married one of the most charming of my sisters. She enjoyed her short days of maternity in that very Servolex where we then pondered together; and, soon after, she found her grave there.

NOTE V.

Here are lacking the notes of about two years, during which I did not write, because I would only have had to write excesses, faults, and misfortunes. Gaming had been my principal occupation. I had, by turns, lost and won considerable sums, at Milan, Paris, and Naples. In obedience to the voice of my mother, who had come in quest of me, I had returned to the paternal roof, which had been almost ruined, also, by unexpected reverses.

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NOTE VI.

* * * I then lived (if living it can be called) in a sort of Limbo, which was half darkness, half light; and which only cast on my soul, my feelings, and my thoughts, a cold and gloomy twilight like that of winter evenings. Ere I had lived, I was tired of life. I retired from life, so to speak, and shut myself up in that disenchanted seclusion, in that solitude of the heart which man sometimes makes for himself by severing all intercourse with the world, and by refraining from all participation in the movement which agitates it. A sort of anticipated and voluntary old age, in which we take refuge before our time; but a false and feigned old age, which hides beneath its apparent coldness days of youth that are more fiery and more tempestuous than those through which we have already passed.

The whole family was absent. The father was at the residence of one of my uncles, hunting in the forests of Burgundy. The mother was travelling. The sisters were scattered about, or at the convent. I spent the whole of one long summer completely alone, shut up along with an aged female servant, my horse, and my dog, in my father's house at Milly. That hamlet, built of gray stone, at the foot of a mountain carpeted with brush; with its pyramidal steeple, whose layers of masonry look as though they were calcined by the sun; with its steep, stony, tortuous paths, bordered by sheds and dunghills, and its houses covered with tiles blacked by the rain, bears a striking resemblance to a village of Calabria or Spain.

This barrenness, this poorness, this calcination, this lack of water, shade, and vegetable life, pleased me. It seemed that thus nature was more in harmony with my soul. I, myself, was a twig of that hill, a roebuck of that rock, a flowerless branch of those bushes. This unusual silence of the paternal house, this solitude of the garden, these empty apartments reminded me of a tomb. This idea of a sepulchre suited my imagination. I felt, or I wished to feel myself dead. I loved that winding-sheet of stone in which I was voluntarily wrapped. The only sounds of life which penetrated into the house were as far distant and as monotonous as the hum of the fields. They have remained in my ear ever since.

I fancy that I can yet hear the cadenced fall of the flails thrashing the grain, in the sunshine, on the hardened clay in

the yard; the bleating of the goats on the mountains; the voices of the children playing in the road at mid-day; the wooden shoes of the vine-dressers returning at eve from their labor; the wheel of the poor spinner, seated in front of her door; or the sharp and strident twitter of the grasshopper, which sounded like a cry of pain, produced by the burn of the scorching rays of the South in the fiery vapor which was exhaled by the plats in the garden.

I spent my time reading, pondering, wandering listlessly from my high chamber to the untenanted parlor; from the parlor to the stable, where I would stretch myself alongside of my dog, on the litter of fresh straw which I would spread with my own hands for my idle horse; from the stable to the garden, where I would water a few beds of lettuce or peas; from the garden to the bald mountain which overlooks it, where I would hide myself amongst the clumps of box, the only plant whose bitterness protects it from the ravages of the goats. From here, I would gaze at the jagged snow-crowned brows of the Alps in the distance, which seemed to me then, and which still seem to me to be the curtain of a land that is too splendid for man to dwell in. I would listen with ecstasies of self-concentration and mournfulness to the melancholy tinkling of the little bells of those flocks, whose sum of happiness and only want on earth is a little grass to crop, and a little sunshine to bask in.

I would have written volumes had I noted the inexhaustible impressions, the shudders of heart, the thoughts, the internal joys, or melancholy feelings which coursed through my mind and my soul during that long summer in the desert. I wrote nothing; I allowed all those sensations, all those modulations, to pass in my bosom, like the breezes which sweep over the plants of the mountain, heedless of the vague sighs which they make them utter, regardless of the perfume which they bear away from them as they pass.

The sighs and perfumes of my youthful heart did not seem to me to be worth gathering. I had even reached such a pitch of dejection and barrenness, that I felt a sort of bitter joy in the consciousness of living, thinking, and feeling in vain, like those flowers which grow amid the inaccessible crags of the Alps, vegetate and bloom unseen by any eye, and which seem to accuse nature of having neither order nor pity in her works.

NOTE VII.

Another circumstance helped to confirm me in this dejection of heart—in this contempt for the world. It was the society and conversation of another recluse who was as sensitive as I, while he was older and more unfortunate. This society was the only diversion I sometimes had in my loneliness. Casual meetings at first, then habit, gradually made this intimacy grow into friendship. Chance seemed to have brought together two men who were of different ages and different stations in life, but who resembled one another by their sensibility and character, and by their conformity of sadness and solitude of soul and their mistrust in earthly happiness. One of these men was the writer of these lines. The other was the poor curate of *Bussières*, a parish of which Milly was a dependancy and only a hamlet.

I have spoken, in the narrative of the first impressions of my childhood, of a young vicar who taught the children of the village their catechism and Latin, in the house of the aged curate of Bussières, and who, hating that puerile pedagogy to which he was condemned, threw aside with disgust the primer and ferule, and, with his dogs in leash and his gun upon his shoulder, escaped from the manse before the needle had marked the hour of the termination of the lesson, and went and finished the day in the fields, and in the woods of our mountains. I have said that his name was the Abbé Dumont; that the manse seemed to be more like a paternal roof than a vicarage to him; that his mother, who was advanced in years, but still handsome and pleasing, had kept house for the curate from time immemorial; that, between the superannuated curate and the young vicar, there existed some relationship which was not clearly defined; that this relationship gave the latter the position of a son rather than that of a skainsmate in the house.

Finally, I have related how the Bishop of Macon—a man of easy and refined manners, as well as a man of letters and study—had taken the adolescent youth to his palace, and had had him reared in all the habits, in all the freedom and all the elegance of the very worldly society of which the episcopal palace was the centre previous to the Revolution. The Revolution had dispersed this society, confiscated the palace, imprisoned the bishop, and banished the young secre-

tary from the bosom of this luxury and these delights, and sent him back to the humble manse of Bussières. The old curate had died. The young man had entered the priesthood; the living had passed as an inheritance into the hands of the youthful ecclesiastic.

The Abbé Dumont was then thirty-eight years of age. He was tall; his limbs were supple; his bearing martial; his garb was secular, spruce, and neat, and, without exactly offending propriety, seemed to indicate a desire on his part to approach as near as possible to the costume of the man of the world, and a wish to make others forget, as well as himself, a profession which had been imposed upon him at a very late day.

His face bore an expression of energy, pride, and virility, which was only softened by the shade of gentle melancholy which habitually overclouded it. It revealed a vigorous nature, shackled by some secret ties which kept it from moving and blazing out. The contour of the cheeks was as pale as a smothered passion; the mouth pure and delicate; the nose straight, moulded with an extreme correctness of outline, rounded and elastic at the nostril, narrow and muscular at the top where it met the forehead and separated the eyes. The eyes were of a plunket color tinged with gray, like a billow in the shade; the glance was deep and somewhat enigmatical, like an interrupted disclosure; the orbs were buried beneath the beetling arch of a brow that was straight, high, broad, and smoothed by thought. His black hair, already somewhat thinned by the waning of his youth, was brushed forward upon his temples in sleek and shining locks, which stuck to the skin and heightened its whiteness. No trace of a tonsure was to be seen on his head. The moistness of the skin and the fineness of the hair gave it a few curves, on the summit of the brow and at the temples, which were hardly perceptible, like those of the acanthus around the marble capital of a column.

Such was the outward appearance of the man with whom —despite the disparity of years—solitude, proximity, similarity of character, mutual attraction, and, finally, the very sadness of our two lives, were about to make me gradually contract a real and lasting friendship.

This friendship was afterwards cemented by time; it lasted until his death, and now, when I occasionally pass through the village of Bussières, my horse—accustomed to that change

of route—turns from the highway in the direction of a small cross, climbs a stony path which winds behind the church and beneath the windows of the old manse, and stops a moment of his own accord beside the low wall of the burial-ground. On the other side of the wall is to be seen the funeral stone placed by me above the body of my friend. The only epitaph it bears, in letters deeply graven in the stone, is his name alongside of my own. Here, during a moment's silence, I give all that the living can give the dead:—a thought—a prayer—a hope of again meeting elsewhere! . . . . . .

NOTE VIII.

Our intimacy formed itself naturally and without any premeditation. I was the only one in that inhabited desert with whom he could converse about the thoughts, the works, the feelings of the soul that he had cultivated with ardent love in his younger days, and in the palace of the bishop of Macon. He still cultivated them in the solitude in which he was confined. He was the only one into whose bosom I, myself, could pour the streams of feeling and melancholy which overran my soul.

Our meetings were frequent: Sunday, at church; other days, in the paths of the village, amid the brush or the broom upon the mountain-side. From my windows I could hear the call of his hounds.

By dint of meeting one another thus at all hours, we at length felt the want of one another's society. He saw that in that young man's soul there were germs whose blooming and development it would be interesting to watch. I felt that within that mature man who was tired of life there was a destiny which, like my own at that moment, was soured and deceived, and a morbid but strong soul near which my soul could avenge its own wretchedness by attaching itself at least to another that was quite as wretched.

I lent him books. I went and hired them, every week, at a library in Macon, and brought them back to Milly in my saddlebags. He lent me the worm-eaten volumes of ecclesiastical history and sacred literature, which he had found in the library of the bishop of Macon. These had been bequeathed

to him by the prelate. We conversed upon the subjects of our readings. By the conformity of our opinions on the same works, we were thus made aware of the consonance of our minds and hearts. We become attached by what we discover similar to ourselves in those whom we study. After all, love and friendship are nothing more than the image of a being reciprocally seen and reflected in the heart of another being. When both these images are so completely commingled that the two only make one, then the friendship or love is perfect. Our friendship was perfecting itself thus every day.

NOTE IX.

Ere long we were not satisfied with these fortuitous meetings in the paths of the two villages. He came to see me; I returned his visits. Between his house and my father's dwelling there was only a slight hill to cross. At the foot of this hill, which was covered with creeping vines, you found a fountain beneath several willows, and a hollow path, bordered by hedges, which ran across meadows.

At the extremity of these meadows, a little gate, closed by a single bolt, gave ingress into a small kitchen-garden surrounded by walls lined with espaliers. At the back of this garden, a long, low house with an outer gallery, whose roof rested on wooden pillars. A little court-yard, closed in by a shed, an oven, and a woodhouse. On the breast-walls of the gallery, two handsome dogs lay, and howled when the gate was opened. A few pots of mignionette and choice flowers on the landing. A few chickens in the yard; a few pigeons on the roof. This was the manse.

On the opposite side of the garden, the house rested on the graveyard, which surrounded the church like a badly-levelled meadow. Above the cemetery, the eye extended through a vista to the sides of uncultivated mountains intersected by high chestnut-trees. Thence, it wandered obliquely over a sombre and black valley, which was lost in the warm vapor of the sun in summer,—in the smoke of the mist and the waters in winter. The sound of the bell, which tolled at the three periods of the day, and for baptisms and burials; the footsteps of the peasants returning from their work; the vocifer-

ations of the children, crying for their belated mothers, at noon and in the evening, on the threshold of their cottages; were the only noises which penetrated into that house from without. Within, all that was to be heard was the little bustle made by the curate's mother and his niece, as they pealed the vegetables for the soup, or spread the linen upon the gallery.

NOTE X.

Before long I became an additional guest in that lowly dwelling, an additional partaker of the frugal fare of that humble board. I would enter the manse almost every evening at sunset. When I had left the shade of two or three hornbeam-trees in the garden of Milly, beneath which I had sought shelter from the burning rays of an August sun; when I had closed my books; when I had caressed and tended my horse with care, and spread beneath his shining hoofs the litter of fresh straw for the night, I would slowly ascend the hill, and glide like an additional shade of evening amongst the last shadows projected by the willow's over the meadows. I would open the little garden-gate of the vicarage of Bussières. The dogs knew me, and never barked at me now. They seemed to be waiting for me at the customary hour on the threshold. They would spring forward to greet me, and as if to warn the household of the arrival of the young friend. The benign smile of the curate's aged mother, the courteous blush of his niece, showed me those pleasing faces of hosts which are the most grateful salutations and compliments of hospitality.

NOTE XI.

I generally found the Abbé Dumont busy pruning his vines, or weeding his lettuce beds, or clearing his trees of worms and caterpillars. I would take the watering-pot from the hands of the mother, and help the niece to draw up the long rope of the well. We would all work in the garden as long as a ray of light illumined the heavens. We would then enter the curate's apartment. The walls were naked, and merely pargeted with

white lime, which was cracked by the nails which he had stuck into it to hang up his guns, hunting-knives, jackets, and equipments, and a few engravings, framed in pine wood, representing the captivity of Louis XVI. and his family in the Temple. For, as I have already said, the Abbé Dumont,—by an inconsistency which was very common amongst the men of those days,—was a royalist, although he was a democrat, and a counter-revolutionist in feeling, although he detested the old dynasty, and although he shared all the doctrines and all the aspirations of the Revolution.

On the other hand, none of the attributes of his office was to be seen either on those walls or on the mantelpiece. Neither a breviary, nor a crucifix, nor an image of a male or female saint, nor a sacred vestment. All these things were relegated to the vestry-room, where they were left to the care of the bell-ringer. He did not wish that any thing belonging to his church should follow him into his house and remind him of his servitude and his chains. Nothing indicated that he was the curate of the village, unless it was a little crazy table which was banished to one of the corners of the room, and on which were to be seen a register of the births and deaths, and the boxes of sugar-plums, bound round with blue or pink ribands, which are given to the minister who performs the holy ceremonies at weddings and christenings.

At nightfall, he would light a tallow candle, or a remnant of a yellow wax taper removed from one of the branched candlesticks on the altar. After a few moments spent in reading or conversation, the niece would spread the cloth on the table, from which she had previously removed the ink, books, and papers. Supper would then be served.

It usually consisted of brown bread, made of rye and bran, mixed; a few eggs, fried in the pan and seasoned with a dash of vinegar; salad, or asparagus, culled in the garden; snails, gathered in the dew on the grape-vine leaves, and slowly cooked in a stewpan beneath the ashes; scraped gourd, baked in an earthen dish on days when bread was cooked; from time to time, one of those old, skinny, yellow chickens, which the poor young women of the mountains, when they are churched, bring as a present to the curate, in memory of the tender doves which the women of Judea brought to the Temple when they arose from childbed; and finally, a few hares or a few partridges, the produce of the morning's chase. Other dishes were seldom seen on the table. The penury of the house

would not permit the mother to go to market. This frugal meal was washed down by some of the white or red wine of the country; the vine-dressers give it to the sexton, who, in vintage time, goes from winepress to winepress, in quest of it. The repast terminated with a few fruits plucked from the espaliers, and small goat's-milk cheeses, fresh and white, sprinkled with gray salt, which excite thirst, and give a zest to the wine which is drunk by the peasants of our valleys.

The Abbé Dumont, although he had not the slightest degree of the sensuality of the table, sometimes condescended—in order to relieve his aged mother and instruct his niece—to superintend the bread in the oven, the roast on the spit, the eggs or the vegetables on the fire, and to sea on the simple or strange dishes which we ate together, and over which we discoursed cheerfully on the culinary art. It was thus that I myself learned how to prepare and cook, with my own hands, the daily food of the poor inhabitants of the country, and to find pleasure and a certain degree of peasant-like dignity in those domestic labors which liberate man from the servitude of his wants, and accustom him to have less dread of indigence or mediocrity.

NOTE XII.

After supper, we would discuss—at one time with elbows leaning on the table; at another, walking in the moonlight on the gallery—those subjects which, like unavoidable accidents, eternally revisit the conversation of two solitary beings whose only occupation is their thoughts: the destiny of man upon earth,—the vanity of his ambition,—the injustice of fate towards talent and virtue,—the mutability and uncertainty of the opinions of man; the religions, philosophies, and literature of different ages and different people; the preference due to this great man above another; the superiority of such an orator, or such a writer, over the writers and orators, his competitors; the grandeur of the human mind in some men, its pettiness in others;—then the perusal of passages from such or such an author, to justify our judgments or support our preferences,—fragments from Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Fenelon, Bossuet, Voltaire, Rousseau, books which were successively

placed upon the table, opened, closed, re-opened, compared, discussed, admired, or put aside, like the cards of that great game of the soul which the genius of man eternally plays with the enigma of nature.

NOTE XIII.

Sometimes, but very seldom, a few of the beautiful lines of the ancient poets were recited by me in their original language, beneath the very roof which had heard me spell the first words of Greek and Latin. But verses occupied but a narrow space in those quotations and conversations. The Abbé Dumont,—like several of the superior men that I have been most intimate with and have loved the most in my lifetime,—had no taste for them. He only prized the sense, and cared very little for the music of written words. He was not endued with that sort of intellectual materiality which, in the poet, associates an harmonious sensation with an idea or a feeling, and which thus gives a double hold on the man—through the ear and through the mind.

It seemed to him—and since then it has often seemed to me—that there was in reality a sort of humiliating puerility for reason, in that studied cadence of rhythm and mechanical consonance of rhyme, which only address themselves to man's ear, and which unite a voluptuousness that is purely sensual with the moral grandeur of a thought, or with the manly energy of a feeling. He thought that verse was the language of the childhood of nations—prose, the language of their maturity. I now think that he was right. Poetry lies not in this empty jingle of rhymes; it is in the idea, in the sentiment, and in the figure—that *Trinity* of speech which changes it into the human *Word.* Rhymsters will say that I blaspheme; real poets will feel that I am right. Changing speech into music is not perfecting it; it is materializing it. The simple, exact, and forcible word to express pure thought or naked sentiment, without paying any more attention to the sound than to the material form of the word: that is style, that is expression, that is the Word. All the rest is voluptuousness, but childishness—*Nugæ canores.* If you doubt it, unite in imagination Plato and Rossini in the same man. What will you have done? You will undoubtedly have

added to the greatness of Rossini, but you will have diminished the greatness of Plato.

NOTE XIV.

At that time, I neither contested nor approved that instinctive repugnance felt by certain men with vigorous minds, to the jingling blandishments of versified thought. I loved verse as we love a color, a sound, or a perfume in nature. I read a great many—I wrote none.

From these literary subjects we always came, by a natural deviation, to the most important questions of politics, philosophy, and religion. As we had both drawn our nurture from the marrow of Grecian and Roman antiquity, we had both adored liberty as a high-sounding word ere we had adored it as a sacred thing, and as the exclusive moral right of freemen.

We abominated the Empire and that government which was but a plagiarism of monarchy; we lamented that such a hero as Bonaparte had not been at the same time a complete great man, and had only used the material forces of the Revolution—which had fallen into his hands from lassitude—to forge anew the old chains of despotism, false aristocracy, and prejudice, which the Revolution had shivered to pieces. The Abbé Dumont, although he abhorred jacobinism, had on his lips and in his heart a certain republican tartness, which was sharp yet pleasing. This he unconsciously communicated to me. My young soul—free from all base ambitions—as independent as solitude—imbittered by the tyranny of fate, which seemed obstinately determined to shut me out of the world—was predisposed to adopt that austerity of opinion which consoles us for the slights of fortune, by making us despise the favors which it showers on others. The Restoration, which had intoxicated us both with hopes, was beginning to cheat those hopes. It at least granted freedom to think, read, write, and discuss. It had much of the internal commotion of free governments, and many of their storms of opinion. But the pretensions of the nobles who returned from foreign lands; the restless domination of the clergy; the barefaced incapacity of the court; the superstitious adoration of the past, which incredulous courtiers strove to reanimate in the hearts of a people who had grown two

centuries older in the space of twenty-five years, destroyed all our illusions. We did not complain aloud, through fear of being mistaken for partisans of the Empire; but we mourned in silence, and we ascended or descended the stream of time in search of governments worthy of humanity. Alas! where are they?

As to religion, the fanaticism which they were then striving to revive under that name, by pious ceremonies, processions, and preachings, seemed to us to be the wretched masquerade of a political party that wished to make itself sacred in the eyes of the people by the affectation of a faith of which it only assumed the outward show. It was easy to see that the Abbé Dumont was as philosophical as the age in which he had been born. His real gospel was the creed of the Vicar of Savoy. The mysteries of religion, which honor and the necessity of acting in conformity with his profession made him perform, seemed to him hardly more than a *ritual* without any importance, a code of morals illustrated by symbolical dogmas and traditional practices which did not encroach in the slightest degree upon his independence of mind and his reason. He said it was the language of the sanctuary in which he spoke of God to a childish people. But within his own walls, he spoke of the Almighty in the language of Plato, Cicero, and Rousseau.

NOTE XV.

And yet, although his mind was skeptical, his soul, which had been humbled and softened by misfortune, was pious. His greatest happiness would have been the power to give that vague piety the form and reality of a settled faith. He exerted all his strength to curb his mind and make it bend to the yoke of Catholicism and the dogmas of his profession. He perused with obstinate perseverance the *Genius of Christianism*, by M. de Chateaubriand, the writings of M. de Bonald, those of M. de Lamennais, M. Frayssinous, the Cardinal de Beausset—all those more or less eloquent oracles that suddenly arose out of the ruins of the Christian religion at that period as if to protest against its death from the depths of the grave. But his mind, which rebelled against the logic of those writers, admired their genius more than it adopted their dogmas. He prayed with their style, which excited and moved his feelings,

but he could not believe with their belief. In his eyes, those apostles were pious undertakers who adorn the dead body, but do not reanimate it.

As to myself, I was younger and more sensitive than he, and yielded more readily to the blandishments of the religion of my childhood and my mother. In solitude, piety always returned to me: it has always made be better. I did not believe with my mind, but I believed with my heart. The void which had been made in my soul by the evaporation of the faith of my childhood in the dissipations of those years of shame and sorrow, seemed to me to be delightfully filled up by that feeling of divine love which again became warm beneath the ashes of my first excesses, and which purified while it consoled me. For me, poetry and the tenderness of religion were like those two saintly women who sat upon the sepulchre of the Saviour of mankind, and to whom the angels said in vain—

"He is not here."

NOTE XVI.

I was obstinate in my desire to recover the belief of my youth on the spot where I had acquired the belief of my childhood. I loved the retirement and the shade of those little village churches in which men assemble and kneel, to find consolation, at the feet of a God of flesh and blood like themselves. It seemed to me that the incommensurable space between man and the God that has no shape, no name, and no shadow, was filled up by that mystery of incarnation. If I did not acknowledge the whole of it as a truth, I adored it as a marvellous poem of the soul. I embellished it with all the prestiges of my imagination. I embalmed it with all my desires. I colored it with all the hues of my mind, with all the tints of my enthusiasm. I subjected my rebellious reason to that ardent wish to believe, that I might be able to love and pray. I strenuously drove from my mind every shadow, every doubt, every repugnance. I succeeded in partly forming the illusions for which I thirsted; and, to give you an exact notion of the state of my soul at that period, if I did not then adore the God of my mother as my God, I at least bore Him on my heart as my idol.

NOTE XVII.

When sleep would exert its influence over us and begin to clog the words upon our lips, I would take up my gun, call my dog, and the Abbé Dumont would walk with me as far as the extremity of the meadow which terminated the valley of Bussières; here we would shake hands. I would silently climb the stony hill, at one time in the light of soft summer nights; at another, through the humid shadows which were made still heavier by the thick mists of the beginning of autumn.

I would find the aged servant waiting for me, and twirling her distaff the while by the light of the brazen lamp which hung in the kitchen. I would retire to rest and awake on the morrow, to begin another day similar to the one that had passed.

That which increased my attachment to the poor curate of Bussières, was the cloud of melancholy which saddened his countenance. That shadow extinguished the last fires of youth in his glance, and lent a certain faint-hearted languor to his words and his voice, which was in harmony with my own languidness of mind. You could feel that there was a painful and smothered mystery hid beneath his disclosures. You could see that he never told you all that he had to say, and that a last secret always hovered round his lips, but never escaped from them.

I never attempted to wrest that mystery from him; he would not have intrusted it to me. Between a confession of that nature and the most friendly intimacy with a young man of my age, arose the barrier of the sacred proprieties of his holy office. But the whisperings of the gossips of the village began to reveal to me some confused rumors; and, at a later day, I was made acquainted with that sorrowful mystery in all its details. Here it is:—

At the time when persecution drove the bishop of Macon from his palace and confined him in a dungeon, the Abbé Dumont was nothing more than a young and handsome secretary; he returned to the dwelling of the aged curate of Bussières, who had taken his oath of adherence to the constitution. He mingled with the world, and, with the ascendency which his face, his courage, and his mind gave him, participated in the various movements of opinion which agitated the

youth of Macon and Lyons at the downfall of monarchy. In the beginning of the Republic he made himself particularly notorious by his antipathy to the Jacobins and his boldness in opposing them. During the Reign of Terror he was tracked as a royalist, and he finally enrolled himself in those secret bands of young royalists which were spreading in every direction, and which formed a chain from the Sevennes mountains to the environs of Lyons.

He was daring and venturesome; and conformity of opinion, as well as the chances of association and the dangers of civil war, made him form an intimacy with the son of an aged noble of the Forez. The chateau of that family was situated in a wild valley, on a steep hillock. It was a hotbed of conspiracy, and the headquarters of the royalist youth of the neighborhood. The old lord had lost his wife at the commencement of the Revolution. At her death, she had left him four daughters, who had hardly passed through the age of adolescence. These young girls—reared without a mother, without a governess, in the chateau of an old man, who was a hunter and a soldier, and whose character was singular and eccentric, while his mind was illiterate and uncultivated—had none of the attributes of their sex but extreme beauty, simplicity, and grace, united to all the vividness of feeling and all the imprudence of their age.

Their father had accustomed them, from their earliest childhood, to be his companions at table, in the midst of his guests of every description, and to ride horses, handle guns, and follow him to the chase, which was the principal occupation of his life. It is easy to credit that such a charming court always assembled around such an old man, in peace or war, at the feast or in the chase, naturally attracted youth, courage, and love to the chateau of ***.

The Abbé Dumont, in the garb of a warrior and hunter, young, handsome, agile, dexterous, eloquent, hailed by the father, welcomed by his friend the son, agreeable to the young girls by the elegance of his manners and the superiority of his mind, became the most assiduous skainsmate at the chateau. It may be said that he was a member of the family and an additional brother to the young girls. In one of the high turrets of the donjon, he occupied a chamber which overlooked the whole country, and from which could be seen a great extent of the only road which led to the castle. As he was appointed to give notice of the approach of the gendarmes or

patrols of the National Guard, he watched over the security of the doors and kept in order the arsenal, which was always well stocked with loaded guns and pistols, and which even contained two mounted culverins, with which the Count de *** was determined to do execution upon the republicans, should they risk themselves in those gorges.

At the chateau, their time was occupied in receiving and despatching disguised messengers who linked the superstitious and counter-revolutionary spirit of those mountains with the emigrants in Savoy and the conspirators in Lyons; in scouring the woods on foot and on horseback for game; in practising the use of arms; in defying the Jacobins of the neighboring towns, who were constantly denouncing that *den* of aristocrats, but who did not dare to disperse it; in playing and dancing with the youth of the chateaux in the neighborhood, who were attracted thither by the united charms of opinion, adventure, and pleasure.

Although the young ladies mingled in all this commotion, and although they were left entirely to the exercise of their own prudence, there was nothing like impropriety or licentiousness in their intercourse with their guests, between whom and themselves, however, there existed mutual preferences, tastes, and attractions. The memory of their mother and the knowledge of their own peril, seemed to protect them better than the most rigid vigilance could have done. They were simple, but innocent; like the daughters of the peasants who were their vassals, they were free from suspicion and prudery, but not devoid of watchfulness over themselves and of the dignity of their sex and their instincts.

The two oldest had become attached, and were betrothed to two young noblemen of the South; the third was impatiently awaiting the time when the convents should be reopened in order to devote herself to God, her only thought. Tranquil in the midst of all that agitation, cold in that hotbed of love and enthusiasm, she managed her father's household affairs like a matron of twenty. The fourth had hardly reached her sixteenth year. She was the favorite of her father and sisters.

The admiration which was felt for her as a young girl was mingled with that cheerful complacency with which children are always treated. Her beauty, which was more attractive than dazzling, was the blooming of a loving soul which allows itself to be gazed upon and inhaled through the features, the

eyes, and the smile. The further you plunged into it, the more of tenderness, innocence, and goodness you discovered in it. From the impression which she made on me,—as I saw her a great many years afterwards, when the dust of life and her tears had doubtless robbed that face of the freshness and the down of adolescence,—it was easy to recall that ravishing reminiscence of sixteen.

She neither had the languidness of the pale daughters of the North, nor the burning glow of a child of the South, nor the melancholy of an English woman, nor the majesty of an Italian woman; her features, in which grace of expression predominated over purity of form,—her pleasing mouth, her small nose, her chestnut hair and eyes,—rather reminded you of a village bride—somewhat scorched by the rays of the sun and the glances of the young men—when she has clothed herself in her wedding garments and sheds around her, as she enters church, a shudder which delights but which does not intimidate.

She unconsciously became attached to that young adventurer, her brother's friend, who was nearer her own age than any of the other strangers who frequented the chateau. In those days, the mere quality of royalist gave those who fought and suffered for the same opinions a certain familiarity in the houses of the nobility where they were received as companions in arms.

The young man was well read. In consequence of this he was chosen by the father to give lessons in reading, writing, and religion, to the young girl. She looked upon him as a brother who was somewhat more advanced in life than herself. He was answerable for her during the perilous excursions which she made with her father and sisters to hunt the wild boar in the mountains; he was the one who adjusted the bridle and fastened the girth of her horse, who loaded her gun, who carried that gun slung across his shoulders, who aided her to overleap the ravines and torrents, who plunged into the thickets and brought her the game which she had shot, who wrapped her in his cloak to protect her from the rain or snow. Such frequent and complete intimacy between a sensitive and ardent young man, and a young girl whose childhood each day was imperceptibly changing into adolescence and charms, could hardly fail of awakening in their bosoms, almost without their knowledge, a first and involuntary attachment. There is no snare more dangerous for two pure hearts, than that which is

prepared by habit and veiled by innocence. They had both fallen into it ere either of them had suspected it. Time and circumstances were soon to make them aware of this.

The Revolutionary Committee of the town of *** was aware of the plots which were brewing with impunity at the chateau of ***. The indignation of the Committee was aroused against the neighboring municipalities, which were either unable or afraid to disperse that nest of conspirators. It resolved to extinguish that counter-revolutionary brand, which threatened to inflame the whole country. It secretly formed a column of gendarmes, light artillery, and national guards. These troops marched all night, in order to arrive beneath the walls of the castle before daybreak, and take the inhabitants by surprise.

There was no means of escape from the chateau, which had been completely surrounded during the slumbers of its inmates. The commander of the republican forces summoned the Count de *** to open the gates. He was constrained to obey. Orders of arrest had been drawn up in advance against the Count and all the principal members of the family,—even the women. They had to surrender themselves as prisoners. The old lord, his brother, son, guests, domestics, and three eldest daughters, were thrown into carts to be taken to the prisons of Lyons. The escutcheons and arms of the castle, including the two culverins, bound round with branches of oak, were dragged as trophies behind the carts into which the prisoners had been thrust. Of all this household, free and peaceful on the eve, the only ones who were not led into captivity, were their constant guest and the Count's youngest daughter.

The young man, who had been awakened in his turret-chamber by the clash of arms and the tramp of horses in the outer court, had hastily dressed and armed himself, and descended to the armory to sell his life as dearly as possible, in the defence of his hosts and friends. It was too late. All the doors of the castle were in the hands of the National Guards. The commander of the column had already entered the Count's room with the gendarmes, where he was busily engaged placing the public seal on the aged nobleman's papers. On the stairs, the young man met the Count's daughters, who were descending to their father's chamber to be by his side and share his fate.

"Save our sister," hurriedly said the three eldest to him; "we are resolved to follow our father everywhere—to the dungeon, or even to the scaffold; but she, she is a mere child,

she has not the right to dispose of her life; hide her from the wretches who guard the doors.—Here is gold!—You will find her in our room, where we have dressed her in male attire. You know the secret passages. God will watch over you. Take her into the Sevennes, to the house of our aged aunt, who is the only relative we have in the wide world; she will receive her, and be a second mother to her. Farewell!"

The stranger followed these instructions to the letter, happy to be the guardian of such a trust and to follow commands which were in such strict conformity with his own inclinations.

NOTE XVIII.

In the castle of * * * there was a subterranean passage,—similar to those which were to be found in all the fortified dwellings of the middle ages,—which began in the vaults beneath the principal tower, passed under the terrace, and, terminating at a postern, descended by a flight of three or four hundred steps to the foot of the steep hillock on which the chateau was built. There, an iron gate, similar to the wicket of a dungeon, practised in a fissure in the rock, opened upon the vast meadows surrounded by woods which formed the bed of the river and the valley.

The existence of this gate, which was never used, was not known to the republicans. The inhabitants of the castle were the only ones who knew where its key was kept, to be used only in extreme emergencies. The young man possessed himself of the key, returned to the chamber of the weeping maiden, conducted her through the gloomy passage, opened the wicket, and, gliding from willow to willow along the bed of the torrent, succeeded in reaching the woods with his sacred charge.

The moment that he found himself in the well-known paths of these forests, armed with two guns, his own and that of his companion, and furnished with gold and ammunition, he bade defiance to all mankind. With the devotedness of a slave and the tender care of a father, he led the maiden,—who looked like his younger brother,—across fields, from thicket to thicket, and from road to road, to the outskirts of the little town in which lived the aunt of Mademoiselle de * * *.

Their hunter's attire precluded the necessity of assigning any reason for the care with which they avoided the high-roads and the villages on their route. On the other hand, the connivance of the royalist and religious peasants of those mountains had accustomed them to respect the secret of those flights and disguises which were so frequent in that section of the country.

Nevertheless, before entering the little town of * * *, where greater vigilance was doubtless exercised, the young man thought it best to warn the aunt of Mademoiselle de * * * of the approach of her young niece, and to ask her under what name and disguise and at what hour he should conduct the maiden to her house.

He despatched a lad to the town with a note for that lady. After the lapse of a few hours, during which the thought of their approaching separation had caused the tears of his companion to flow incessantly, he saw the boy return with the very note which he had written. The aunt herself had been arrested and conveyed by gendarmes to Nismes. The house was closed: the poor child was thus shut out of the only asylum which could have sheltered her at her journey's end. At the bottom of their souls, the two fugitives were more astonished than afflicted by this unexpected blow. The thought of an early and eternal separation appalled them more than they dared to acknowledge even to their own hearts. Fate united them. Even while they reproached it, they adored it.

NOTE XIX.

They deliberated a moment on the course that they should adopt. They naturally, and without any previous understanding, settled upon the course that should separate them at the latest day possible. The young outlaw could not return to the house of the curate of Bussières, without exposing himself to instant arrest and his benefactor to certain ruin; there was not a single house in the Forez in which the young girl might have found an asylum, which had not been closed by the Reign of Terror, and whose owners themselves had not been proscribed. They resolved to turn back

in the direction of the castle of * * *, and ask for shelter in the cottages of some of the hospitable peasants who were yet attached to their old lord, and who inhabited the neighboring mountains.

They returned by short marches. They knocked one night at the door of a poor woman,—the widow of a maker of wooden shoes,—who had been the young girl's nurse, and whose tenderness, gratitude, and devotedness were surety for her fidelity. The lonely hut, situated on the plateau of one of the highest mountains, in a gloomy glade surrounded by beech woods, was inaccessible to any one save the wood-cutters and huntsmen of the neighboring hamlets. Small, low, sunk in the hollow of a ravine; covered with moss-grown thatch, which almost touched the earth and whose color was hardly distinguishable from that of the *steppes* themselves, it looked from below like a part of the gray rocks against which the poor shoemaker had built it. A little column of bluish smoke which shot up, each morning and evening, in the midst of the white trunks of the beech-trees, was the only sign that indicated that there was a human habitation there, or that some charcoal-burner had lighted his fire of green wood beneath his nomade hut.

NOTE XX.

Within these walls, built of angular blocks of dark granite and black slate, and spotted by the rain, there was only one small room, in which the poor woman and her children slept. The hearth was formed by a large unhewn stone on which smoked a fire of broom. Alongside of the hut, stood a stable which was somewhat larger than the room, and beneath whose roof was a sort of loft, made of interwoven branches, in which hay and straw were stowed for winter use. A she-ass, two goats, and a few sheep entered here in the evening, driven by little children, under whose care they were sent to pasture.

The nurse, who had long since been informed of the catastrophe at the castle,—the imprisonment of the Count, and the disappearance of the young girl that she had so dearly loved, —burst into tears when she recognised her foster-child beneath her male attire. She gave her mistress her own bed, at

the foot of which she spread a couch of broom for herself; she carried the beds of the little children into the stable which was warmed by the breath of the flock, and gave the stranger a few thick fleeces with which to protect himself from the cold in the hayloft.

After settling matters in this way, she set out before the break of day and trudged to the most distant borough in the mountains, to purchase some white bread, wine, cheese, and a few chickens for the nurture of her guests. She took the precaution to buy these things in different villages, through fear of arousing suspicion by an outlay which was disproportionate to her means and her habits. Before mid-day, she had again climbed the mountain, emptied her wallets upon the floor, and spread the cloth for the repast of the strangers.

NOTE XXI.

The nurse had given orders to her children not to go further than a certain distance from the hut, and not to talk with the mountain shepherds about the two hunters who had brought plenty, joy, and the blessing of God into their dwelling. The children, proud to be the repositories and the guardians of a mystery, obeyed their mother faithfully. No one in the whole country suspected that the shoemaker's humble hut,—which was buried in leaves in summer, and in fog and snow in winter,—contained within its walls a whole world of happiness, love, and faithfulness. If I thus describe this hut, it is because I visited it, at another period of my life, during a journey which I took to the South.

No one can either know, invent, or describe all the feelings that agitated the hearts of that youthful couple,—who were thus brought together by solitude, necessity, and mutual attraction,—during the year which was made too long by the terror which reigned without, but which was too short, perhaps, for the words of love and trust which were uttered within. Not a syllable of these conversations and confessions ever went further than the walls of the hut, the lilacs in the garden, the bed of the torrent, or the beech-trees in the forest. The life of those two young hermits never escaped beyond those precincts. They only sallied forth at night, with their

loaded guns on their arms, to stretch their limbs which were fatigued by repose; to take long nocturnal rambles through unfrequented paths; to breathe the perfume of the sweet-scented broom; to cull the Alpine flowers by the light of the summer moon; or to seat themselves side by side on the moss-grown slope of a concave rock, whence their eyes plunged into the valley of * * *, and rested upon the deserted castle, or wandered as far as the vast horizon of blue which, like a deep sea, stretched above the Rhine and extended as far as the snows of the Italian Alps.

NOTE XXII.

Who can accuse them without first accusing their destiny? In that forced association, who can say what undefined limit between respect and adoration, or between virtue and love, bounded the feeling which those two children nourished towards one another? God's eye alone could have seen it. The eye of man is dimmed and dazzled and moistened when it rests on the mystery of such a situation! If fault there was, man can only see it through the tears, which, as he condemns, wash out the fault and absolve the faulty.—The doors of the world closed upon them, those of heaven opened to them; the pressure of proscription weighing upon their hearts and driving them, despite themselves, into each other's arms; the similarity of age, costume, and feeling; the equal innocence or ignorance of danger; the difference of station forgotten or obliterated in that complete estrangement from the world; the uncertainty whether society, with its prejudices and distinctions, would ever be open to them again; the haste to take advantage of the freedom which they were in momentary danger of losing, and which they enjoyed as a stolen pleasure; the shortness of life at a time when no one knew whether a morrow would ever dawn; that darkness of the night which breeds intimacy; that light of the moon which inebriates the eye and bewilders the heart; their double captivity in the nurse's dwelling—a captivity which left their thoughts no possible diversion, which offered no interruption to their intercourse; finally, that elevated, narrow, and almost inaccessible part of space which appeared to them as an aërial

isle suspended between the earth, which they could see at a distance beneath their feet, and the sky, which they beheld so near above their heads,—every thing concurred to drive them into each other's arms, and bind them by all the ties of their souls in a moral union; to force them to search each other's heart for that life which had shrunk from around them, and, as it were, faded from their sight:—a life that thus became double at the very moment when they were threatened with its loss, and which only had solitude for its scene of action and contemplation for its food.

NOTE XXIII.

Were they sufficiently prudent, young as they were, to foresee the eternal temptations of their solitude? Were they sufficiently strong to resist them when they experienced them? Did they love one another as brother and sister? Did they promise one another more tender names?—Who can answer? I have been intimately acquainted with both of them. Neither the one nor the other ever confessed any thing with regard to that year of adventure. Whenever they met, however, many years afterwards, they never looked at one another in the presence of strangers. A sudden cloud of mingled red and white would spread itself over their countenances, as if some phantom of past days, which we could not see, had passed before their eyes and cast its magical reflection upon their features. Was it affection badly smothered?—passion kindled again beneath the ashes by a breath?—indifference agitated by remembrance?—regret?—or remorse?—Who can peer into two sealed hearts and read characters which have been obliterated by torrents of tears, and which are only visible to the eye of God?

NOTE XXIV.

More than one year passed thus. Then the Reign of Terror became less severe in that section of the country. The prisons

[illegible]en. The old Count and his three daughters re-entered their ruined castle. The nurse led the youngest daughter back to her father's arms. The stranger was the last to leave those mountains.

He returned to the vicarage of Bussières, sad, and apparently twenty years older. His character had attained the maturity of ten additional years in a few short months. He followed the chase with greater assiduity than before, in the company of my father and the noblemen of the country. He would sometimes absent himself, however, for several days, and go on distant journeys whose object was unknown to every one. On his return, he would say that his dogs had put him upon the track of some roebucks, and that in order not to lose them he had been obliged to follow. And rumor said that no change had taken place at the chateau of * * *, in the other county, unless it was that the guest who had disappeared no longer visited its owners as of yore. The latter continued to lead the life of hunting, feasting, and seigneurial hospitality, which they had led during the Revolution.

NOTE XXV.

As to the poor nurse, she still dwelt in the lonely hut upon the mountain. She had an orphan to rear along with her own children. This child wore linen that was finer than that which was made in the mountains. In his hands he often had toys which looked as though they had been purchased in the town. Whenever the poor woman was asked why this distinction was made, and who was the owner of that orphan, she always answered that she had found him beneath a beech-tree, near the spring, as she was going to fetch water one morning, and that a pedler who trafficked on those mountains sometimes brought him white linen and toys of ivory and coral. That charity had made her rich. I have known this orphan. He was the child of proscription, and he had its sadness in his soul and upon his features.

Five or six years afterwards, the Count's youngest daughter was married to an old man, who was the most gentle and the most indulgent of fathers to her. She devoted herself to the care of his declining years. He took her with him to a little

town in the South, in which he lived. The young companion of her exile, who, until then, had been wavering between the world and the church, suddenly put an end to his irresolution when he heard of the young girl's marriage. He saw nothing more in life that was worthy of a regret. He gave it up without any effort. He entered a seminary without casting a look behind him. Then he went and shut himself up for a few weeks with his former patron, the bishop of Macon, who had at last been liberated and who was ending his days, in the midst of poverty and infirmities, in the house of one of his faithful servants, within a few feet of what had formerly been his episcopal palace. The bishop invested him with holy orders. He returned to discharge the humble duties of the vicarage of Bussières. He continued them, as I have said, until the death of the old curate, to whom he succeeded.

NOTE XXVI.

Such was the hidden part of that man's life, a life which chance seemed to have placed alongside of my own life as a mournful and tender consonance with the precocious disenchantment of my youth,—a bitter smile of resignation above an abyss of painful sensibility, burning recollections, smouldering love, and restrained tears. It was the transparency of all these things in his demeanor, in his physiognomy, in his silence, and in his accent, no doubt, which attached me to him. Had he been happy and faultless, I would not have loved him as I did. There is a degree of pity in all our friendships. Misfortune has an attraction for certain souls. The cement of our heart is mixed with tears, and nearly all our deep affections have their beginning in some sorrowful emotion!

NOTE XXVII.

This is the manner in which I spent that summer of solitude and dryness of soul. The compression of my moral life in that aridity and loneliness; the intensity of thought with which I was incessantly searching the void of my existence;

the palpitations of my heart, which was burning without any thing real on which its flames could feed, and revolting against the hard privations of air, light, and love for which I was thirsting, at length mutilated me and consumed me even in my body, and gave me fits of languor, spasms, dejection of mind, a distaste for life, and a desire to die, which I mistook for maladies of the body and which were nothing but the sickness of my soul.

This alarmed the family physician, who sometimes checked his horse in front of our door, on his way from one village to another. He was a good, feeling, intelligent person; his name was Pascal. He loved me as a plant which he had tended in its graceful infancy. He ordered me to go to the waters of Aix, in Savoy, although the season for bathing was over, and although October had already lent the valleys their first mists and the air its first chills. But in making this prescription, he thought less of the effect of the waters than of the benefit which he expected me to derive from diversion, moral agitation, and change of scene. Alas! he was but too well inspired and too faithfully obeyed!

I borrowed twenty-five louis of one of my father's old friends, a poor and amiable graybeard, named M. Blondel, who loved youth because he himself was possessed of goodness, that eternal sap, that inexhaustible youth of the soul. I cast my horse loose to roam at will along with the oxen which are fattened in the meadows of Saint Point, and I set out. I took my departure without any of that vague eagerness, without any of those keen desires, without any of that joy which I had felt when starting upon less gloomy, less silent excursions; bearing with me my voluntary solitude, and also feeling something like a foreboding that I was to lose some part of self during that journey, and that on my return I would not bring back my heart.

Here are some lines which I wrote at that period, and which I afterwards found on the margin of a copy of Tacitus:—

NOTE XXVIII.

(Written on the road beneath a tree, in the valley of the *Echelles*, at Chambery.)

To-day I enter my twenty-eighth year, and I am as jaded as if I had lived a hundred. I did not think that it was such

a difficult thing to live. Come, let us see; why is it so difficult? A piece of bread, and a drop of water from this spring, are all that life requires. My organs are healthy. My limbs are agile. I freely inhale an air embalmed with vegetable life. I have a dazzling sky above my head, natural and sublime scenery before my eyes. This torrent on my left, foaming with the joy which it feels in the rapidity of its course; this cascade, proud to drag its own rainbows with it in its fall; these rocks, which bathe their moss and flowers in the salutary damps of the waters; up yonder, those chalets suspended from the cornices of the mountain like swallows' nests from the edge of the heavenly roof; these flocks grazing in the sea of rich grass in which their very hams are drowned; these shepherds seated on the projecting points of the valley, watching the flight of the torrent and of day; these peasants and these young girls who pass along the road in their holiday clothes, and who, stimulated by the sound of the distant bell, quicken their pace to reach the door of the house of prayer in time:—is not all this the picture of contentment and life? Do these countenances wear the furrow of thought and care which darkens mine?—No. Their features shed a light which has no shade. You can look into their very depths, and you can only see limpid souls. If I were to bury my eyes in the depths of my own bosom, it would take me whole hours to disentangle all that is stirring within me. . . . . . .

And yet I no longer have a single passion in this nether world; but the heart is never so heavy as when it is empty. Wherefore?—Because it fills itself with weariness.—Oh! yes, I have a passion, the direst, the most crushing, the most gnawing of all—weariness!

I have been a madman. I have met happiness and not known it!—or rather, I have known it only after it has been beyond my reach! I would not accept it. I have despised it. Death has made it its own. O Graziella! Graziella!—why did I forsake thee! . . . . . . The only delightful days of my life were those spent near to thee in thy father's humble dwelling, with thy young brother and thy aged grandmother, like a child of the family! Why did I not remain there? And when I at length understood my love, why did I not love thee sufficiently to prefer thee to every thing, to never be ashamed of thee, to make myself a fisherman like thy father, and to forget, in that simple life and in thy arms, my name, my country, my education, and all the garb of chains in

which my soul has been clothed, and which shackles that soul at each step which it attempts to make to enter thy nature? . . . .

Now, it is too late! . . . Thou hast nothing to give me but an eternal remorse for having left thee! . . . . and I have nothing to give thee but these tears which ascend to my eyes whenever I think of thee—tears whose cause and object I hide, through fear that they may say:—He weeps for the daughter of a poor seller of fish, for a girl who did not even wear shoes every day, who dried the figs of her native isle on willow hurdles in the sun, with nought but her tresses for a head-dress, and who earned her living by rubbing coral against a grindstone, at two *grani* a day! . . . . What a sweetheart! for a young man who has translated Tibullus and read Dorat and Parny!

Vanity! vanity! thou corrupter of hearts! thou subverter of nature! There art not enough blasphemies on my lips to hurl against thee! . . . . . .

And yet, my happiness was there, my love was there. Oh! if a sigh more sad than the moan of the waters of this abyss, more ardent than the ray which is reverberated by yon rock glowing with the fire of heaven could reanimate thee! . . . . I would go and bathe thy beauteous naked feet with my tears. . . . . Thou wouldst forgive me. . . . . For the sake of thee, I would be proud of my debasement in the eyes of the world! . . . .

I see thee again, as if four years of forgetfulness and the thickness of the coffin and the sod of the grave were not between us! . . . . Thou art there! a garment of gray wool mixed with the rough hair of the goat imprisons thy childlike waist and falls in heavy folds down to thy round and naked ankles. It is tied across thy bosom by a simple string of black thread. Thy tresses, fastened behind thy head, are intertwined with two or three carnations, the red but faded flowers of yesterday. Thou art seated on the terrace near the seashore—where the clothes are drying, the chickens hatching, and the lizards crawling—between two or three pots of mignionette and rosemary. The red dust of the coral, polished by thee yesterday, strews the threshold of thy room next to mine. A little crazy table stands in front of thee. I am behind. I hold thy hand in mine to guide thy fingers over the paper and to teach thee to form the letters. Thou appliest thyself with an attention and a charming awkwardness

of attitude which almost lay thy cheek upon the table. Then thou suddenly breakest into tears of fretfulness and shame, when thou seest that the letter which thou hast copied is so far from the model! I chide thee, I encourage thee; thou takest up the pen again. This time thou dost better. Thou turnest thy face glowing red with joy towards me, as if to seek thy reward in a glance of satisfaction from thy teacher. I negligently twine a ringlet of thy raven hair around my finger, like a living ring! a twig of ivy still clinging to the vine! . . . . Thou sayest to me: "Art thou pleased? will I soon be able to write thy name?" And when the lesson is ended, thou returnest to thy work, on the bench, in the shade. I resume my reading at thy feet.——And the winter evenings, when the bright and rosy light of the olive-stones ignited by thy breath in the brazier was reflected on thy neck and face, and made thee look like the *Fornarina!* And during the beautiful days at Procida, when thou wouldst bury thy naked feet in the foam on the strand to gather the sea-fruit! And when thou wouldst ponder, with thy cheek resting on thy hand and thine eyes fixed on me, and when the growing sadness of thy features would make me fancy that thou wast thinking of thy mother's death!——And the night, when I left thee lifeless and white, like a marble statue, on thy bed, and when I at length felt that a thought had killed thee——and that that thought was me!——Ah! let me have no other image before my eyes until the hour of my death!—there is a tomb in my past life—there is a little cross in my heart. I will never permit it to be torn out, but around it will entwine the purest flowers of remembrance! * *

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Here ends the note. The rest of the book contains rough draughts of verses, and tavern accounts on the road to Chambery.

NOTE XXIX.

Just as I was writing these sad lines, with my book upon my knees, on the edge of the road, a post-chaise coming from France galloped past. In the vehicle there were three young

men and a young woman. They gazed at me with a look of surprise and irony:

"Oh! do look!" cried the young woman, smiling the while, "this is doubtless the poet of this part of the universe! Oh! what a handsome poet!—if he was not so dusty!"

Hateful world! wilt thou always dog my steps with thy frivolous visions? I moved from the spot to avoid being seen. I went and seated myself at a greater distance from the brink of the road, beneath a tuft of box—whence I could no longer see the waterfall, although I could hear it—and I continued to write.

I only feel a little dew upon my heart when I am completely alone with nature. All that merely passes through that solitude disturbs and interrupts that mute communion between the genius of solitude, which is God, and I. The language which nature speaks to my soul is a language of whispers. The slightest noise drowns its tones and prevents my hearing them. In that sanctuary in which we collect our thoughts to dream, meditate, and pray, we do not like to hear the tread of a stranger behind us. I was in one of those hours of melancholy—which were frequent then, which are rare now—during which I either hearkened to the throbbings of my own heart, or pressed my ear against the ground to hear—beneath the sod, in the woods, in the waters, in the leaves, in the flight of the clouds, in the distant rotations of the stars—the murmurs of creation, the wheel-work of the Infinite, and, so to speak, God's own noises.

NOTE XXX.

I therefore sought another place of refuge, with a certain degree of inward anger towards those unfortunate bursts of laughter which had grated on my ear and disturbed my thoughts. I hid myself behind a large rock, detached from the mountain, and near the immense and streaming gutter through which the torrent fell perpendicularly into the valley. Its monotonous noise deafened me; its spray, as it fell around my grass-grown couch, formed a mist through which the sun shone, and which floated in the air like the folds of a gauze curtain which the breezes capriciously rolled and unrolled. I

resumed my inward conversation. I buried myself in my sadness. I retraced all the steps that I had taken during my short existence. I asked myself whether life was worth the trouble it had cost me to live, and whether it were not better to be one of the glittering drops of that humid dust which was evaporated in a second by the sun's rays, and which lost itself without feeling in the diaphanous ether, instead of a human soul, which lives, languishes, suffers, and dies for years and years, and in the end also evaporates into I know not what ocean of being, which must be full of moans and sobs if it receives all the sufferings of the earth and all the agonies of sentient beings.

"I have walked but a very short way," said I to myself, "and I have already had enough! My activity of mind devours itself from lack of other food. I feel within myself sufficient strength to raise these mountains, and my destiny does not give me even a straw to raise! Work would occupy my mind, and I have nothing to do! All the doors of life are closed upon me. It seems that it is my fate to be an exile from active life, to live upon the land of others, and to be at home nowhere, save in the desert and in contemplation! Since I cannot employ my intellectual powers in some useful and glorious pursuit, I would at least wish to employ the power of attachment and love which presses upon my heart and almost crushes it because there is not another being that I can press against that heart. Even this is denied me. I am alone in the world of feeling as well as in the world of intelligence and action. When I met Graziella, it was too soon; my heart was too green to love. Afterwards, the hearts of women of which I caught glimpses were vases whose natural perfume had evaporated, and which no longer contained aught but vanity, frivolity, voluptuousness, and the falsehood of worldly love—those dregs of the soul which soon disgusted me. Now, no one loves me, and I love no one; I am upon the earth as if I did not belong to the earth; if this stone were to crush me, if this thundering tongue of water were to catch me in its embrace and dash me to atoms at the bottom of yon abyss, no one, but my mother, would miss me. What!" continued I, in my own bosom, "can it be that there is not a second Graziella upon this earth, whatsoever her station may be? Is there not a young, pure, and loving soul in which mine would melt, which would lose itself in my soul, and which would complete in me, while I would complete in her, this imperfect

wandering, mourning being as long as he is alone; who would be settled, consoled, and happy the moment he had exchanged his empty heart for another heart?"

And so painfully did I feel the weariness of this solitude of soul, this desert of indifference, this aridity of life, that I wished to die instantly, to go and find the shade of Graziella, since I had not found her counterpart in any of the giddy, frivolous, thoughtless women that I had met.

NOTE XXXI.

While I was thus drowning myself in that gloom of my own sensibility without an object, I was awakened out of my revery by the harmonious scraping of the strings of one of those rural instruments which the young Savoyards construct during the long winter nights in their mountains, and which they carry with them into France and Piedmont to recall to their minds—by some rustic tunes, some *ranz des vaches*—images of their poor country. These instruments are called *vielles,** because they chatter more than they sing, and because the burden of their tunes are prolonged and die away, discordantly and tremulously, like the voices of old women by the village fireside in the evening.

I turned my head in the direction whence came these sounds. At a few feet from me, I saw, without being seen myself, a group which has never faded from my memory since, which I have partly depicted in the poem of *Jocelyn*, and which the pencil of *Greuze* would have chosen for one of its simplest and most touching pictures.

NOTE XXXII.

On a strip of greensward which was sheltered from the road and the waterfall, between two rocks overshadowed by two or three alder-trees, a child twelve or thirteen years old,

* In English, *hurdy-gurdy*. I preserve the original French word above, however, on account of the simile which follows it.—Tr.

a young man of twenty, and a young girl of about eighteen, sat in the sun. The child was playing with a little white dog of the mountains, with long hair, and ears erect and triangular; one of those dogs that hunt the marmotto beneath the snows of the Alps. He amused himself by first slipping over the dog's head, and then snatching away, the animal's leather collar, hung around with small bells which jingled as the child raised the collar above his head, while the dog stood upon his hind paws to recover his noisy ornament.

The young man was clothed in a long waistcoat of shaggy white cloth which was quite new. He had on high gaiters made of the same stuff, which reached above the knee and displayed the muscles of the leg. His shoes were likewise new and their thick soles shone with large nails, the cone of whose diamond-shaped heads had not yet been worn down by use. A long staff shod with iron rested between his legs; his hands were clasped around it, and its head, which looked like ivory or horn, touched his chin. A sort of knapsack, with two straps of white leather to pass over the shoulder and be fastened under the arm-pits, lay upon the ground at a short distance from him. His face was handsome, thoughtful, calm, and somewhat sad, like the beautiful physiognomies of those ruminating oxen which are seen reclining in the rich grass of the Jura, around the chalets. Two long locks of yellowish hair, cut square at the ends, hung down either cheek. His eyes were fixed upon the iron ferule of his staff, and he seemed to be absorbed in mute thought.

NOTE XXXIII.

The young girl was tall, delicate, and slender, and her person was somewhat less vigorous than the forms of the women of the same age amongst the peasantry that dwell on the plains. In the shape of the neck, in the position of the head, in the manner in which the arms were hung to the shoulders, in the gentle swelling of the chest on which the breasts were very low and hardly perceptible, as on the Grecian figures of the women of Sparta, there was something active, proud, and wild, which reminded you of the elasticity and pliancy of neck and head of the chamois. Her dress of coarse green

worsted stuff, ornamented with a lace of black thread, only descended a little below the knees. Her stockings were blue. Her shoes hardly covered the extremity of her toes. They were fastened over the instep by large steel buckles. She wore a red neckerchief which fell triangularly between her shoulders, and was folded across her bosom. A golden chain around her neck. A black head-dress edged with wide flat lace, which hung like faded leaves upon her forehead and encircled her face. Her eyes were bluer than the bluest blue of the water of cascades. Her features were not strongly marked, but gentle, proud, and fascinating; her complexion was as white and as roseate as that of the women who are reared in the shade of the parlors of our cities, or in the harems of Asia. The eternal coolness of these mountains, the vicinage of the snows, the humidity of the waters, and the reverberation of the meadows protect the daughters of the Alps from the influences which bronze the skin of the daughters of the South.

This young girl was sitting, leaning on her left arm, between the boy—who, from the resemblance between them, seemed to be her brother—and the young man, who might have been taken either for her betrothed or her lover. Her right hand had drawn towards her the musical instrument which was yet half hid beneath its leathern cover. She was listlessly turning its handle with the tips of her fingers as if to distract her thoughts, and producing a few sounds which she seemed not to hear. Her physiognomy was a mixture of careless resolution and deep revery, which ascended in a cloud from her heart to her face, and in moisture to her eyes. You could see that a silent drama was passing between those two faces that did not dare to look at one another through fear of weeping, but which saw and heard one another even while they appeared to be listening to other sounds and looking at other sights.

Alas! it was the eternal drama of life: the hand that attracts and the hand that repels! love and its obstacles—happiness and separation! . . . . I saw at a single glance that that was the halt which the young girls of these mountains make with their lovers when the latter are starting upon their long journeys, after they have escorted them alone to the distance of half a day's march from their village.

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NOTE XXXIV.

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It was the scraping of the rustic instrument which had attracted my eyes and my attention.

Hid as I was by a clump of box and the point of the rock against which I had leaned my shoulders, I could see this group without being seen by those who composed it. By raising my eyes a little higher, I perceived an old woman bent almost double by age, and whose white locks were tossed about her neck by the breath of the waterfall. She was doubtless the mother of one of the young travellers, and she unaffectedly stood at a distance from them, as if to leave them at liberty to enjoy a last interview. She appeared to be seeking, with an abstracted air, from bush to bush, for the red fruit of the barberry, which she raised to her mouth and gathered in her apron.

Ere long the young girl pushed away the instrument with her foot, and leaning both her hands upon the sod, with her face towards the youth, they conversed in low tones, and looked mournfully at one another for a quarter of an hour. I could not hear their words; but from the expression of their lips and eyes I saw that their hearts were melting, and that tears were on the brink of their thoughts. They seemed to be bidding one another farewell, and interchanging advice and vows; they did not perceive that day was declining.

Suddenly, the boy, who had been dancing with the dog on a green knoll at a short distance from their resting-place, bounded down the acclivity and interrupted their talk:

"Brother," said he, "thou badest me warn thee when the sun would be upon the mountain; there it is, round and red, between the tops of the pine-trees."

At these words the youth and the young girl arose without making any reply; they called to the old woman; she approached them; the boy replaced the collar on the dog's neck, and the animal took its station at its master's heels. The group drew closer together; the youth first kissed the mother, then the lad; finally, he and the young girl held one another a long time in a close embrace; they parted, then approached one another again, and exchanged one more kiss, then at last moved away in opposite directions without look-

ing behind them, as if they feared they would not be able to resist the temptation to rush into one another's arms again and again. The boy alone remained with the young traveller, and escorted him a short distance along the road to France.

This silent scene had made me forget all my gloomy thoughts. This departure was sorrowful, but it left the supposition of a return, and love was at the bottom of that grief. Love suffices to console every thing; there was nothing at the bottom of my heart but the weariness which is felt,—that nothingness which suffers, that abyss which is made deeper by all the feelings which do not fill it.

NOTE XXXV.

I rose from the ground with a start. I seized my book, my wallet, and my stick, which lay upon the grass. A mechanical feeling of curiosity made me return to the road at the very moment when the boy, retracing his steps, was about to join the two women again. They were silently advancing in front of us. I opened a conversation with the lad, walking by his side and suiting my pace to his. After a short dialogue, I ascertained that the traveller was the boy's elder brother; that he was the betrothed of the beautiful girl, whose name was *Margaret;* that the aged woman was Margaret's mother; that these two women dwelt in the first village of *La Maurienne* as well as his brother and himself; that they had wished to escort the one who was going away as far as the half of his first day's march towards France; that the name of that brother was *José;* that, one year before the age of *conscription,* he had maimed himself by falling from the top of a walnut-tree which he had climbed to gather nuts for Margaret; that that mishap had been fortunate for him, because it had kept him from serving as a soldier, and because the mother of the beautiful Margaret—who was courted by the richest inhabitants of the neighboring hamlets—had promised him her daughter as a recompense for the accident suffered in her service; that Margaret and José loved one another as brother and sister; that they were to be married when José had earned enough to purchase the little orchard which was behind his father's house; that, to this end, he had learned two

trades suitable to his infirmity, which would not permit him to perform severe bodily labor,—the trade of a village schoolmaster, and that of a musician for festivals and weddings; finally, that every autumn he thus set out to go and ply these two trades in the mountains, behind Lyons; but that they thought that this would be his last journey, as he had already returned three times with a well-filled leathern purse; and his departure made Margaret weep so bitterly, and she was so sad during his absence, that her mother would have to consent to take José into her house and keep him there forever, at the return of spring.

NOTE XXXVI.

While conversing thus, we were gaining upon the two women. Already was I almost walking on the shadow of beautiful Margaret, which the setting sun lengthened upon the road, even to the edge of my feet. I admired in silence the delicate form and cadenced carriage of that ravishing daughter of the mountains, on whom nature had bestowed more majesty and grace than art can affect in the studied attitude of the women of our theatres and our parlors.

Meanwhile, she had taken off her stockings, and was walking barefoot, with one of her handsome shoes, with buckles, in either hand. She heard me talking with the child, and she turned her head from time to time to call him to her. Her face was serious, but serene and tearless. You could catch a glimpse of hope beneath her grief. She quickened her step, doubtless to reach her village before nightfall.

Suddenly, from the summit of a little acclivity over which the road passes, at a quarter of an hour's walk from the waterfall, a low and distant scraping of the *vielle* sounded, and was prolonged in a melancholy tune, which swept through the leaves of the aspen and ash-trees which grow on the left bank of the torrent of Coux.

We all four turned our heads at the same moment in the direction whence came the sounds; we saw in the distance, at the top of one of the flights of steps which run up the sides of the acclivity of the Echelles, poor José standing, with his back against one of the rocks on the roadside. His dog, be-

side him, looked like a speck of white. His face was turned in the direction of Savoy; and, having loosened his *vielle*, he was playing a last farewell to the rocks of his native land and the heart of his dear Margaret. The poor girl dropped her shoes from her hands, hid her face in her apron, and sobbed bitterly on the brink of the road, as she hearkened to the fleeting notes which each puff of wind brought to her along with the remembrance of the evenings in the stable, and the far-distant hopes of the future spring.

None of us interrupted, by a vain word of consolation, that aërial conversation between two souls whose interpreter were a piece of wood and a bit of brass wire, which enabled them to commune, for the last time, through the space and time which already separated them.

When the tune was at an end, and had plunged its dying burden in the last vibrations of the clear atmosphere of evening, Margaret listened yet a moment, looked towards José, saw him gradually disappear in the hollow of the declivity, and continued her walk, with her clasped hands hanging upon her apron. In her abstraction, she had forgotten her shoes in the road. I picked them up, hurried towards her, and presented them to her without uttering a word. She thanked me with a feeble smile, and a moment afterwards I heard her say to her mother:

"This young man is *humane;* see, he seems to be as sad as we are."

We all four trudged on in silence. When we reached a point in the road where it branches off, one part of it running in the direction of Chambery, the other turning beneath the mountains towards the dark valley of Maurienne, I said farewell to the little boy, the women gave me a nod of the head, and we each went our way, they talking together, I dreaming.

That scene had struck me as a vision of felicity and love, in the midst of the aridity and loneliness of my heart. Margaret had reminded me of Graziella. Graziella was nothing more than a dream that had passed away, but that very dream made the reality of my solitude of heart all the more intolerable. I would have given my name and my education a thousand times over to have been in José's place. I felt that I was approaching the period of a great crisis in my life; that that life could not continue as it then was, and that I must either love or die. Buried in these thoughts and fancies, I

strolled, at nightfall, through the long and gloomy faubourg of Chambery.

At some future day I will note down how chance made me meet Margaret again a short time afterwards, how she in turn was of service to me, and how she fortuitously became mingled with one of the most painful rendings of the life of my heart.

APPENDIX.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

In compliance with the promise made in the note at the foot of p. 94, we give, below, the original of M. de Lamartine's imitation of M. de Lormain's versified translation of Ossian's Poems; and as, amongst the readers of this work, there will doubtless be many possessed of greater capacity, and having more leisure than we were allowed by the hurried publication of this translation, to do justice to the piece which we have attempted to render in rhyme, we also publish in this Appendix "The First Regret," in French, as well as "The Swallow," which an abler and more experienced pen than our own has rendered with a grace of expression which fully interprets, if it does not enhance the beauties of the original lines.

A LUCY L . . .

RÉCITATIF.

La harpe de Morven de mon ame est l'emblème;
Elle entend de Cromla les pas des morts venir;
Sa corde à mon chevet résonne d'elle-même
Quand passe sur ses nerfs l'ombre de l'avenir.
Ombres de l'avenir, levez-vous pour mon ame!
Ecartez la vapeur qui vous voile à mes yeux . . .
Quelle étoile descend? . . . Quel fantôme de femme
Pose ses pieds muets sur le cristal des cieux? . . .
* * * * * * * * *
Est-ce un songe qui meurt? une ame qui vient vivre?
Mêlée aux brumes d'or dans l'impalpable éther
Elle ressemble aux fils du blanc tissu du givre

Qu'aux vitres de l'hiver les songes font flotter.
Ne soufflez pas sur elle, ô vents tièdes des vagues!
Ne fondez pas cette ombre, éclairs du firmament!
Oiseaux, n'effacez pas sous vos pieds ces traits vagues
Où la vierge apparait aux rêves de l'amant!

La lampe du pêcheur qui vogue dans la brume
A des rayons moins doux que son regard lointain.
Le feu que le berger dans la bruyère allume
Se fond moins vaguement dans les feux du matin.
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Sous sa robe d'enfant, qui glisse des épaules
A peine aperçoit-on deux globes palpitans,
Comme les nœuds formés sous l'écorce des saules,
Qui font renfler la tige aux sèves du printemps.

CHANT.

" Il est nuits sur les monts. L'avalauche ébranlée
" Glisse par intervalle aux flancs de la vallée.
" Sur les sentiers perdus sa poudre se répand;
" Le pied d'acier du cerf à ce bruit se suspend.
" Prêtant l'oreille au chien qui le poursuit en rêve,
" Il attend pour s'enfuir que le croissant se lève.
" L'arbre au bord du ravin, noir et déraciné,
" Se penche comme un mât sous la vague incliné.
" La corneille qui dort sur une branche nue,
" S'éveille et pousse un cri qui se perd dans la nue;
" Elle fait dans son vol pleuvoir à flocons blancs
" La neige qui chargeait ses ailes sur ses flancs.
" Les nuages chassés par les brises humides
" S'empilent sur les monts en sombres pyramides,
" Ou comme des vaisseaux sur le golfe écumant
" Labourent de sillons le bleu du firmament.
" Le vent transi d'Erin qui nivelle la plaine
" Sur la lèvre en glaçons coupe et raidit l'halaine;
" Et le lac où languit de bateau renversé
" N'est qu'un champ de frimas par l'ouragan hersé.
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" Un toit blanchi de chaume où la tourbe allumée
" Fait ramper sur le ciel une pâle fumée;
" La voix du chien hurlant, en triste aboiement sort
" Seul vestige de vie au sein de cette mort!
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" Quel est au sein des nuits ce jeune homme, ou c rêve,
" Qui de l'étang glacé, suit à grands pas la grève,

" Gravit l'âpre colline, une arme dans la main,
" Rencontre le chevreuil sans changer son chemin,
" Redescend des hauteurs dans la gorge profonde
" Où la tour des vieux chefs chancelle au bord de l'onde;
" Son noir lévrier quête et hurle dans les bois,
" Et la brise glacée est pleine d'une voix.

CHANT DU CHASSEUR.

" Lève-toi! lève-toi! sur les collines sombres,
" Biche aux cornes d'argent que poursuivent les ombres!
" O lune! sur ces murs épands tes blancs reflets!
" Des songes de mon front ces murs sont le palais!
" Des rayons vaporeux de ta chaste lumière
" A mes yeux fascinés fais briller chaque pierre;
" Ruisselle sur l'ardoise, et jusque dans mon cœur
" Rejaillis, ô mon astre, en torrens de langueur!
" Aux fentes des créneaux la giroflée est morte.
" Le lierre au coups du Nord frisonne sur la porte
" Comme un manteau neigeux dont le patre, au retour,
" Secoue avant d'entrer les frimas dans la cour.
" Le mur épais s'entr'ouvre à l'épaisse fenêtre . . . .
" Lune! avec ton rayon mon regard y pénètre!
" J'y vois, à la lueur du large et haut foyer,
" Dans l'âtre au reflet rouge un frène flamboyer.

LE CHASSEUR.

" Astre indiscret des nuits, que vois-tu dans la salle?

LA LUNE.

" Les chiens du fier chasseur qui dorment sur la dalle.

LE CHASSEUR.

" Que m'importent les chiens, le chevreuil et le cor?
" Astre indiscret des nuits, regarde et dis encor.

LA LUNE.

" Sous l'ombre d'un pilier la nourrice dévide
" La toison des agneaux sur le rouet rapide.
" Ses yeux sous le sommeil se ferment à demi;
" Sur son épaule enfin son front penche endormi;
" Oubliant le duvet dont la quenouille est pleine,
" Dans la cendre à ses pieds glisse et roule la laine.

LE CHASSEUR.

" Que me fait la nourrice aux doigts chargés de jours?
" Astre éclatant des nuits, regarde et dis toujours!

LA LUNE.

" Entre l'âtre et le mur, la blanche jeune fille,
" Laissant sur ses genoux sa toile et son aiguille,
" Sur la table accoudée . . . .

LE CHASSEUR.

" Astre indiscret des nuits !
" Arrête toi sur elle ! et regarde et poursuis !

LA LUNE.

" Sur la table de chêne, accoudée et pensive,
" Elle suit du regard la forme fugitive
" De l'ombre et des lueurs qui flottent sur le mur,
" Comme des moucherons sur un ruisseau d'azur.
" On dirait que ses yeux fixés sur des mystères
" Cherchent un sens caché dans ces vains charactères,
" Et qu'elle voit d'avance entrer dans cette tour
" L'ombre aux traits indécis de son futur amour.
" Non, jamais un amant qu'à sa couche j'enlève,
" Dans ses bras assoupis n'enlaça plus beau rève !
" Vois-tu ses noirs cheveux, de ses charmes jaloux,
" Rouler comme une nuit jusque sur ses genoux ?

LE CHASSEUR.

" Soufflez, brises du ciel ! ouvrez ce sombre voile !
" Nuages de son front, rendez-moi mon étoile !
" Laissez-moi seulement sous ce jais entrevoir
" La blancheur de son bras sortant du réseau noir !
" Ou l'ondulation de sa taille élancée,
" Ou ce coude arrondi qui porte sa pensée,
" Ou le lys de sa joue, ou le bleu du regard
" Dont le seul souvenir me perce comme un dard.
" O fille du rocher ! tu ne sais pas de quels rèves
" Avec ce globe obscur de tes yeux tu soulèves !
" A chacun des long cils qui voilent leur langueur,
" Comme l'abeille au trêfle, est suspendu mon cœur.
" Reste, oh ! reste longtemps sur ton bras assoupie
" Pour assouvir l'amour du chasseur qui t'épie !
" Je ne sens ni la nuit ni les mordans frimas.
" Ton souffle est mon foyer, tes yeux sont mes climats.
" Des ombres, de mon sein, ta pensée est la flammë.
" Toute neige est printemps aux rayons de ton ame !
" Oh dors ! oh ! rève ainsi, la tête sûr ton bras !
" Et quand au jour, demain, tu te réveilleras,
" Puissent mes longs regards, incrustés sur la pierre,
" Rester collés au mur et dire à ta paupière
" Qu'un fantome a veillé sur toi dans ton sommeil !
" Et puisses-tu chercher son nom a ton réveil !"

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RÉCITATIF.

Ainsi chantait, au pied de la tour isolée,
Le barde aux brun cheveux, sous la nuit étoilée
Et transis par le froid, ses chiens le laissaient seul,
Et le givre en tombant le couvrait d'un linceul,

Et le vent qui glaçait le sang dans ses artères
L'endormait par degrés du sommeil de ses pères,
Et les loups qui rôdaient sur l'hiver sans chemin,
Hurlant de joie aux morts, le flairaient pour demain.
Et pendant qu'il mourait au bord du précipice,
La vierge reveillée ecoutait la nourrice
A voix basse contant les choses d'autrefois,
Ou tirait un accord de harpe sous ses doigts,
Ou, frappant le tison aux brûlantes prunelles,
Lisait sa destinée au vol des étincelles,
Ou regardait, distraite, aux flammes du noyer
Les murs réverbérer les lueurs du foyer.

(MILLY, 1805, 16 decembre.)

LE PREMIER REGRET.

Sur la plage sonore où la mer de Sorrente
Déroule ses flots bleus au pied de l'oranger,
Il est, près du sentier, sous la haie odorante,
Une pierre petite, étroite, indifférente
Aux pas distraits de l'étranger.

La giroflée y cache un seul nom sous ses gerbes,
Un nom que nul écho n'a jamais répété !
Quelquefois cependant le passant arrêté,
Lisant l'âge et la date en écartant les herbes,
Et sentant dans ses yeux quelques larmes courir,
Dit: "Elle avait seize ans! c'est bien tôt pour mourir!"

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Dit: "Elle avait seize ans!"—Oui, seize ans! et cet âge
N'avait jamais brillé sur un front plus charmant!
Et jamais tout l'éclat de ce brûlant rivage
Ne s'était réfléchi dans un œil plus aimant!
Moi seul je la revois, telle que la pensée
Dans l'âme où rien ne meurt, vivante l'a laissée,
Vivante! comme à l'heure où ses yeux sur les miens,
Prolongeant sur la mer nos premiers entretiens,
Ses cheveux noirs livrés au vent qui les dénoue,
Et l'ombre de la voile errante sur sa joue,
Elle écoutait le chant du nocturne pêcheur,
De la brise embaumée aspirait la fraîcheur,
Me montrait dans le ciel la lune épanouie,
Comme une fleur des nuits dont l'aube est réjouie,
Et l'écume argentée, et me disait: "Pourquoi

Tout brille-t-il ainsi dans les airs et dans moi?
Jamais ces champs d'azur semés de tant de flammes,
Jamais ces sables d'or où vont mourir les lames,
Ces monts dont les sommets tremblent au fond des cieux,
Ces golfes couronnés de bois silencieux,
Ces lueurs sur la côte, et ces chants sur les vagues,
N'avaient ému mes sens de voluptés si vagues!
Pourquoi, comme ce soir, n'ai-je jamais rêvé?
Un astre dans mon cœur s'est-il aussi levé!
Et toi, fils du matin, dis, à ces nuits si belles
Les nuits de ton pays sans moi resemblaient-elles?"
Puis, regardant sa mère, assise auprès de nous,
Posait pour s'endormir son front sur ses genoux.

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Que son œil était pur et sa lèvre candide!
Que son œil inondait mon regard de clarté!
Le beau lac de Némi, qu'aucun souffle ne ride,
A moins de transparence et de limpidité!
Dans cette âme, avant elle, on voyait ses pensées,
Ses paupières jamais, sur ces beaux yeux baissées,
Ne voilaient son regard d'innocence rempli;
Nul souci sur son front n'avait laissé son pli;
Tout folâtrait en elle: et ce jeune sourire,
Qui plus tard sur la bouche avec tristesse expire,
Sur sa lèvre entr'ouverte était toujours flottant,
Comme un pur arc-en-ciel sur un jour éclatant!
Nulle ombre ne voilait ce ravissant visage,
Ce rayon n'avait pas traversé de nuage!
Son pas insouciant, indécis, balancé,
Flottait comme un flot libre où le jour est bercé,
Ou courait pour courir; et sa voix argentine,
Echo limpide et pur de son âme enfantine,
Musique de cette âme où tout semblait chanter,
Egayait jusqu'à l'air qui l'entendait monter!

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Mon image en son cœur se grava la première,
Comme dans l'œil qui s'ouvre, au matin, la lumière;
Elle ne regarda plus rien après ce jour;
De l'heure qu'elle aima, l'univers fut amour!
Elle me confondait avec sa propre vie.
Voyait tout dans mon âme, et je faisais partie
De ce monde enchanté qui flottait sous ses yeux,

Du bonheur de la terre et de l'espoir des cieux
Elle ne pensait plus au temps, à la distance;
L'heure seule absorbait toute son existence;
Avant moi cette vie était sans souvenir,
Un soir de ces beaux jours était tout l'avenir!
Elle se confiait à la douce nature
Qui souriait sur nous, à la prière pure
Qu'elle allait, le cœur plein de joie et non de pleurs,
A l'autel qu'elle aimait répandre avec ses fleurs:
Et sa main m'entraînait aux marches de son temple,
Et, comme un humble enfant, je suivais son exemple,
Et sa voix me disait tout bas: "Prie avec moi!
Car je ne comprends pas le ciel même sans toi!"

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Voyez dans son bassin l'eau d'une source vive
S'arrondir comme un lac sous son étroite rive,
Bleue et claire, à l'abri du vent qui va courir,
Et du rayon brûlant qui pourrait la tarir!
Un cygne blanc nageant sur la nappe limpide,
En y plongeant son cou qu'enveloppe la ride,
Orne sans le ternir le liquide miroir,
Et s'y berce au milieu des étoiles du soir;
Mais si, prenant son vol vers des sources nouvelles,
Il bat le flot tremblant de ses humides ailes,
Le ciel s'efface au sein de l'onde qui brunit,
La plume à grands flocons y tombe et la ternit,
Comme si le vautour, ennemi de sa race,
De sa mort sur les flots avait semé la trace;
Et l'azur éclatant de ce lac enchanté
N'est plus qu'une onde obscure où le sable a monté.

Ainsi, quand je partis, tout trembla dans cette âme;
Le rayon s'éteignit, et sa mourante flamme
Remonta dans le ciel pour n'en plus revenir.
Elle n'attendit pas un second avenir;
Elle ne languit pas de doute en espérance,
Et ne disputa pas sa vie à la souffrance;
Elle but d'un seul trait le vase de douleur;
Dans sa première larme elle noya son cœur!
Et semblable à l'oiseau, moins pur et moins beau qu'elle,
Qui le soir, pour dormir, met son cou sous son aile,
Elle s'enveloppa d'un muet désespoir,
Et s'endormit aussi, mais bien avant le soir!

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Elle a dormi quinze ans dans sa couche d'argile,
Et rien ne pleure plus sur son dernier asile,
Et le rapide oubli, second linceul des morts,
A couvert le sentier qui menait vers ces bords;
Nul ne visite plus cette pierre effacée,
Nul n'y songe et n'y prie! . . . excepté ma pensée,
Quand, remontant le flot de mes jours révolus,
Je demande à mon cœur tous ceux qui n'y sont plus,
Et que, les yeux flottans sur ces chères empreintes,
Je pleure dans mon ciel tant d'étoiles éteintes!
Elle fut la première, et sa douce lueur
D'un jour pieux et tendre éclaire encor mon cœur!

Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passées?
Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer;
Revenez, revenez, ô mes tristes pensées!
Je veux rêver et non pleurer!

Un arbuste épineux, à la pâle verdure,
Est le seul monument que lui fit la nature;
Battu des vents de mer, du soleil calciné,
Comme un regret funèbre au cœur enraciné,
Il vit dans le rocher sans lui donner d'ombrage;
La poudre du chemin y blanchit son feuillage;
Il rampe près de terre, où ses rameaux penchés
Par la dent des chevreaux sont toujours retranchés;
Une fleur, au printemps, comme un flocon de neige,
Y flotte un jour ou deux; mais le vent qui l'assiége
L'effeuille avant qu'elle ait répandu son odeur,
Comme la vie, avant qu'elle ait charmé le cœur!
Un oiseau de tendresse et de mélancolie
S'y pose pour chanter sur le rameau qui plie!
Oh! dis, fleur que la vie a fait sitôt flétrir,
N'est-il pas une terre où tout doit refleurir?

Remontez, remontez à ces heures passées!
Vos tristes souvenirs m'aident à soupirer!
Allez où va mon âme! allez, ô mes pensées!
Mon cœur est plein, je veux pleurer.

L'HIRONDELLE.

A MLLE. DE VINCY.

Pourquoi me fuir passagère hirondelle?
Viens reposer ton aile auprès de moi.
Pourquoi me fuir? c'est un cœur qui t'appelle,
Ne suis-je pas voyageur comme toi?

Dans ce désert le destin nous rassemble.
Va, ne crains pas d'y nicher près de moi.
Si tu gémis, nous gémirons ensemble.
Ne suis-je pas isolé comme toi?

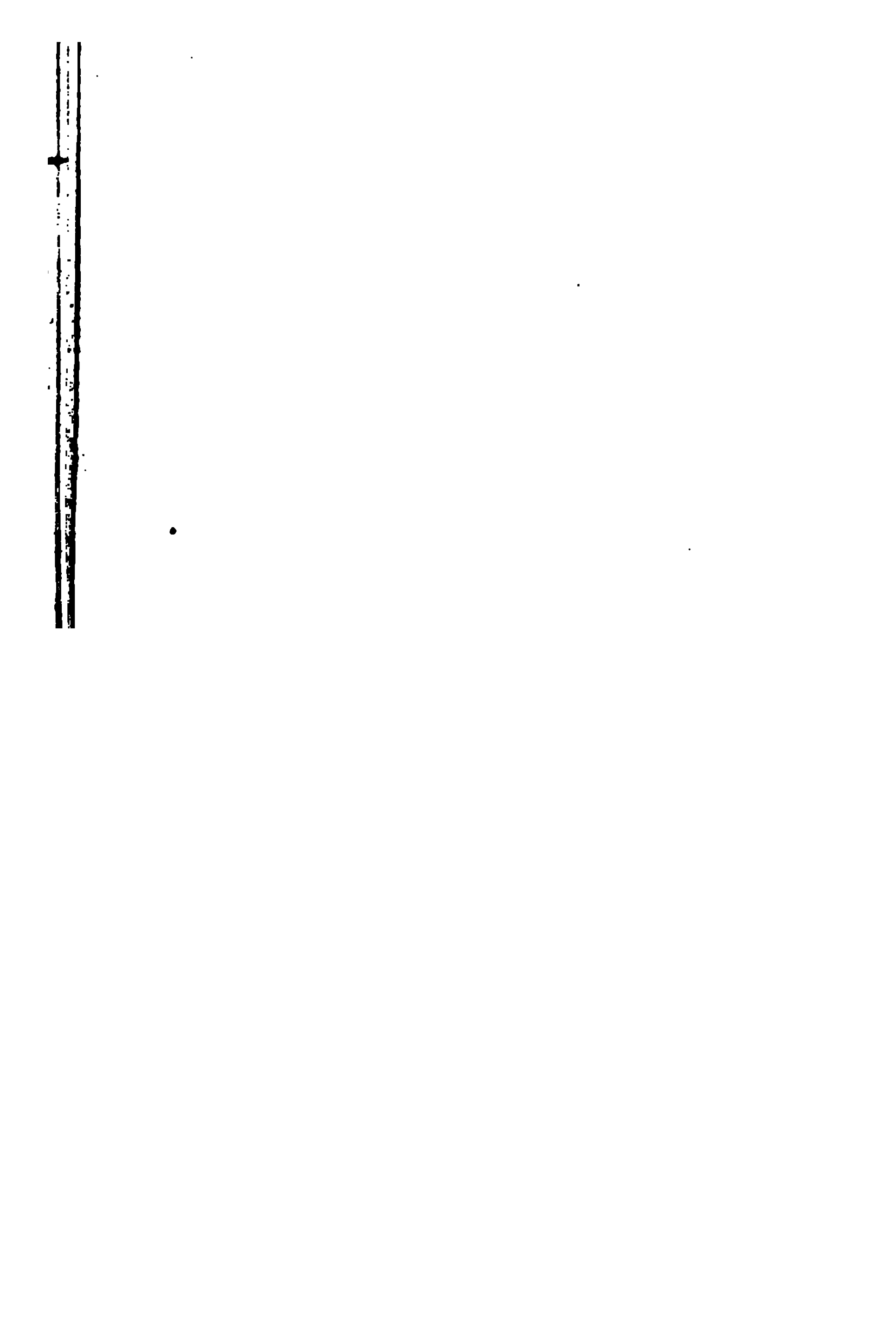
Peut-être, hélas! du toit qui t'a vu naître,
Un sort cruel te chasse ainsi que moi;
Viens t'abriter au mur de ma fenêtre.
Ne suis-je pas exilé comme toi?

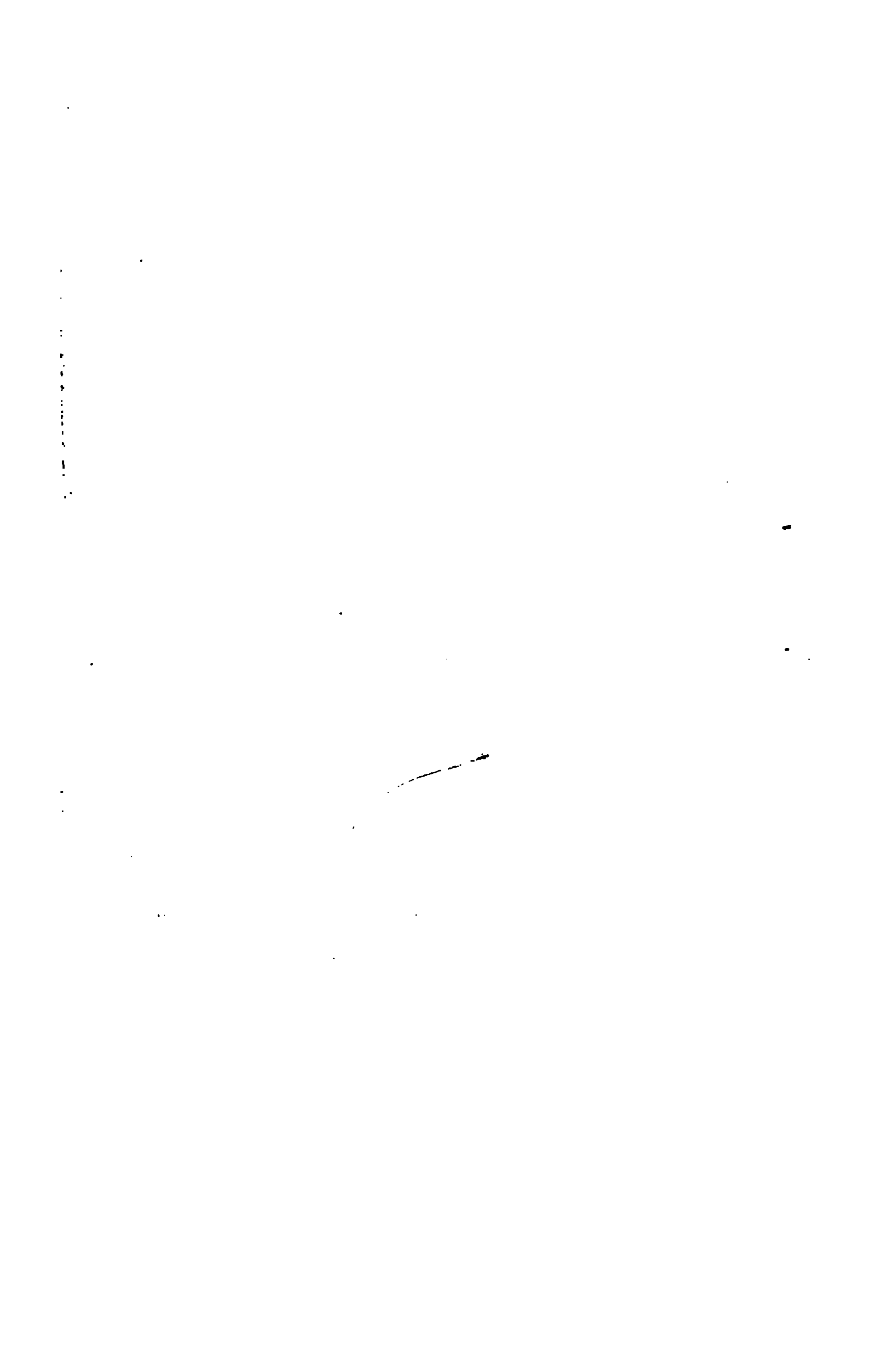
As-tu besoin de laine pour la couche
De tes petits frissonnant près de moi?
J'échaufferai leur duvet sous ma bouche.
N'ai-je pas vu ma mère comme toi?

Vois-tu là bas, sur la rive de France,
Ce seuil aimé, qui s'est ouvert pour moi?
Va! portes-y le rameau d'espérance.
Ne suis-je pas son oiseau comme toi?

Ne me plains pas! Ah! si la tyrannie
De mon pays ferme le seuil pour moi,
Pour retrouver la liberté bannie,
N'avons nous pas notre ciel comme toi?

THE END.






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